

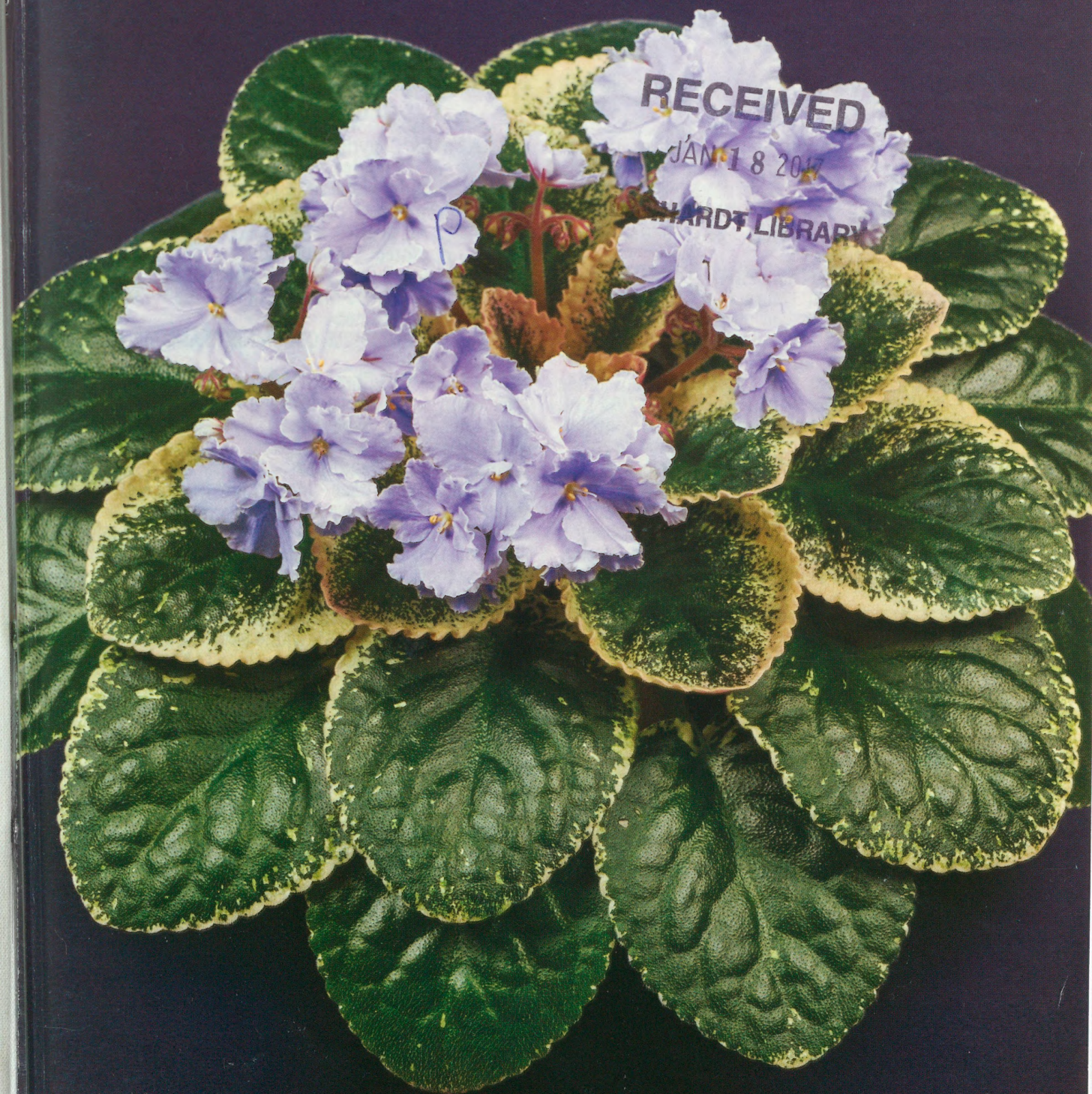
African Violet

MAGAZINE

January • February 2017

Volume 70

Number 1



AVSA Information

FOR CONDUCTING BUSINESS WITHIN YOUR SOCIETY

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Buckeye Nostalgia

Exhibited by: Kurt Jablonski

Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Standard

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Happy New Year!

I trust the Christmas holidays were a time of happiness and relaxation for you all and that the new year will bring forth many new and exciting opportunities.

One opportunity available is that of serving on the AVSA Board of Directors. As you will see published here in the magazine, there are five nominees selected to represent various regions of the country as well as internationally. The nominating committee is elected each year at the Board of Directors meeting and tasked with recruiting at least ten individuals from which five are selected. Do not worry if you are not selected the very first time, as the committee has to ensure a geographic distribution of directors and your name will remain in the file for up to 5 years.

Once elected and installed, the new Director must serve as a member of at least **one** of the various Standing Committees. It is important for this to take place, as new ideas are sometimes helpful and the infusion of various skill sets can contribute to this outcome. This provides the standing committees with potential new members and an opportunity for the new Director to become immediately involved. Some standing committees can become stagnant over time, with very limited change and should look towards including new members, so that their function can be learned and passed along by more than the current body. Succession planning is crucial to a healthy operating organization, as retirement is always inevitable and strategic planning for this becomes a prudent path.

Although each committee chair does not require a Co-Chair, I would highly recommend that each committee chair train a potential new Co-Chair to assist in their leadership of that



committee. This prepares a replacement in the event of retirement from that committee and helps to lessen the burden of one person doing all the work. It also helps to pass on responsibility in the event of illness or other unforeseen circumstances that prevent us from completing our tasks.

The Chairman of the 2017 Nominating Committee is Debbie McInnis, who will be seeking applications for potential new Directors to add to the nominating file. I have not covered all of the requirements of what is expected of a Director, but Debbie would be happy to forward you the relevant information, so that you can become better informed. Please contact her by email at: dkmcinnis@twc.com

Serving on a standing committee is not limited to Directors. Any member of AVSA is able to serve on a committee. If you have a particular skill, talent or area of interest or would just like to become involved, please contact the committee of interest and volunteer your availability. You may also contact me directly and I will do my best to help channel your interest in the right direction.

We all try to do our best and we operate as a volunteer community. There are many hidden talents among our members and if you know of someone who would be an ideal candidate please approach them and help encourage them to step forward or suggest their name to the Nominating Committee.

Please consider this very important service to AVSA, as you comprise the future of this organization and without your involvement, the talent pool remains shallow and can become stagnant. Let's get ourselves involved and help keep AVSA vibrant.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read "Winston J. Goretsky".



Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Happy 2017!

I hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season, and are ready for the New Year. We actually had some pretty cold winter temperatures, which makes me wish the 2017 Orlando Convention was scheduled earlier than it is.

The Article Contest is coming along fantastically. I have articles from members who have never written for the AVM before. Lots of different views and ideas are being shared, and I'm not having to comb through past AVMs, looking for something to run in this issue! Once again, Thank You, **Pat Hancock**, for coming up with such a fantastic idea! And, a heartfelt thanks to all of you who are writing and sharing your articles and ideas.

CORRECTION to the article, '*Passing Along the Passion for Growing*,' page 32, Nov-Dec 2016 AVM.



Katie Ferguson won Best Novice with '*Orchards Bumble Magnet*.' However, the photo of her dish garden was mislabeled. Katie won a blue ribbon for the dish garden, although not the Best Dish Garden, which was won by Christine Brenner, along with the Best Container.

New AV Club Forming in the Florida

I heard that there is a new club forming in the Florida Panhandle region. For information, contact Jerl Weber - Navarre, FL, jweber1103@gmail.com

Jerl is in Santa Rosa County, Florida, and is hoping to get growers from Pensacola, Gulf Breeze, Fort Walton, Crestview, and Destin, FL, together initially.

Ruth

Luncheon Auction

By Edna Rourke, Auction Chairman

99 Old Stratford Road • Shelton, CT 06484-6129 • Apapillon@aol.com • (203) 926-9716

AVSA's 2017 Convention "*Gateway to the Tropics*" in Orlando, Florida, is sure to be a great one, and, will be here before you know it. Our past auction success has all been due to the very generous donations of our members, both amateur and commercial. The success of last year's Luncheon Auction at the convention, "*Violets Color the Land of Enchantment*," in New Mexico, was made possible by your generous donations. I'm sure, that with your help and support this auction will be the best one yet.

Won't you consider donating a violet-related item or violet-related craft item to the auction, either as an individual member or as a club? Your donations make the auction possible. Donations of anything violet-related, or of a rare, unique, or

unusual nature, will be most gratefully accepted.

To our hybridizers and commercial members, both here and abroad, I extend an invitation to kindly donate either supplies, newly introduced plant material, or plants. As in the past, these donations are a very important part of the auction and can make for some very lively bidding.

A listing of all donations and contributors will be acknowledged on the Luncheon tables.

Please either call, or email me, and let me know if you plan to make a donation, or want to help in any way. By phone (203) 926-9716, or email Apapillon@aol.com.

Your help and support will make this auction the best one ever!

See you in Orlando!



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Ma's Glass Slipper

Exhibited by: Erika Geimonen

Hybridized by: O. Robinson

Standard



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Allegro Watermelon Ruffles

Exhibited by: Rhona Thurman

Hybridized by: J. Stromborg

Semiminiature



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Kansas City Barbeque

Exhibited by: Richard Nicholas

Small Talk

By Laurel D. Goretsky

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta, Canada

Email: Laurel@Goretsky.ca

The AVSA convention 'Violets Color the Land of Enchantment' in Albuquerque, NM, had an extensive Amateur Horticulture division and a lovely Commercial Division.

In this column I will be highlighting the semiminiatures, and miniatures, that were winners in the Commercial Division. Unfortunately, there weren't a lot of either in this division, but what was there was memorable!

B.J. Ohme from Lincoln, NE always amazes me at the conventions. He does design, has display tables, enters plants, and runs a commercial table in the salesroom to boot. He really is multi-talented. B.J. won best African violet on display table with the miniature 'Windsome.' This violet has semidouble medium blue blossoms with a white edge. The foliage is medium green and plain. B.J. also won the best AVSA miniature/semiminature collection with the miniatures 'Rob's Gum Bubble,' 'Jolly Ace,' and 'Windsome.' 'Rob's Gum Bubble' has semidouble bright rose-pink pansy blossoms. The leaves are dark green, plain, and round. 'Jolly

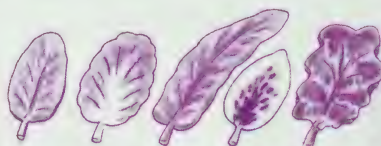


Ace' has single-semidouble blue pansy blossoms with a thin white edge. The foliage is medium green and plain.

I was excited to see some new cultivars do well in the commercial division. Kathy Hajner from Peralta, NM, won Best New Cultivar with semiminiatures 'K's Salsarita' and 2nd Best New Cultivar with 'K's Pink Agate.' 'K's Salsarita' has single-semidouble chimera pansy blossoms with green edges, and a maroon center stripe. The leaves are variegated dark green and white. 'K's Pink Agate' has semidouble-double light pink, large star blossoms with dark pink streaks. The leaves are medium green, quilted, and a reverse spoon. Thank you to Kathy for sending me the descriptions of these plants. 'K's Pink Agate' is a registered variety in First Class.

I love all my miniatures and semiminiatures, whether they are older or new varieties. I just encourage hybridizers to continue bringing us new cultivars. Sometimes, it is just the kick one needs to reignite the passion for growing.

Until next time!



It's Time for a Dust-Buster Session

By Anne-Lee Tomczyk • Tucson, AZ

This article can be written every month and my guess is that it still would not help...especially in this sandy, dusty state in which we live. Everyone (hopefully) takes care of the debris around each of their plants; for example; dropped or spent blooms, damaged leaves, soil overflows. BUT how often do you actually dust your leaves.

Now, I will admit that I am just as bad. I brush my leaves any time I repot and occasionally in between, but constant dust can clog up the pores on the leaf surface and hinder the photosynthesis,

thereby slowing down the growth of your plant.

Every time you vacuum, dust, or sweep your floor you are raising dust and it will cling to those little hairs on your leaves, so place your fingers carefully under each leaf, then brush (a makeup brush or small paint brush works well, not too soft) from the center of the plant to the outside. Your plants will thank you.

From *The Desert Blooms*,
Publication of the Tucson AVS



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Cajun's Fair Maiden

Exhibited by: Terri Post

Hybridized by: B. Thibodeaux

Standard

Report from Persia: Cyclamen mite, miticide and chimera plants

By Parviz Parvin Mehr • Parissa Greenhouses
Persia

This year, 2016, we went through an unexpected and exciting experience which I thought it would be worthwhile to share with others. Please be patient to read the back-ground story.

Late 2015 we realized that we were being attacked by Cyclamen mites. Fortunately, we recognized the attack in the very early stage. We sprayed all our 20,000 plants with a Bayer, German-made miticide called (Spirodiclofen sc 24%) with the trade name Envidor. We were so frightened by the attack, that we decided to repeat using the miticide. To ensure that we were rid of the enemy, we decided to immerse the whole plant into the diluted miticide, rather than spraying again.

A week after the first attempt we immersed all the 20,000 plants, plus babies and leaves, into the diluted miticide. (Dish-washing liquid was added as a wetting agent.)

All personnel were involved in the process for three consecutive days. Each day we used freshly diluted miticide. More time was spent later on to clean the dirt off the plants.

We got rid of the enemy, all right! My thanks to my staff who did the tedious job in a responsible manner.

Some months later we found a chimera (pin wheel) plant among our mature plants. Another chimera was discovered a week or so later. A few more later on, and since then, we have forty-one chimera plants and more still coming. They are in a rainbow of colors, twelve of which are semidouble or singles, but stik tite, and the rest are droppers.

Recently, one of these chimeras has gone through a second mutation and has produced a

new particular plant with four different patterns of pin wheels on the same plant! One, of which is the reverse pattern of the original chimera plant.

Photo marked 'Aram Jan,' is the mother chimera plant. Photos #2, 3, and 4, show the rest of the patterns.



Photo #1 Shows the reverse pattern of the mother plant.



This is my report on what I believe was the effect of using miticide in the above-mentioned way, and the only reason for getting so many mutants in such a short time.

I do not recommend that anyone should unnecessarily use miticide, just for the purpose of acquiring new chimeras. Please don't.

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS



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Chimera (Over-\$1000)

Drying and Preserving Violets

By Cari Most

In her book *Growing to Show*, Pauline Bartholomew wrote that the difference between an enthusiastic grower and a fanatical one is that the fanatic is willing to look at nothing but foliage all year. As an enthusiastic amateur myself, the practice of disbudding has always left me wistful for the beautiful blossoms that could have been, but what if you could gaze upon your favorite flowers whenever you wished?

Drying flowers is certainly not a novel idea, but African violets pose some unique challenges. To best preserve the color and form of a flower, moisture must be removed as quickly as possible. Desert succulents and tropical plants such as violets are designed to absorb and retain large quantities of moisture, and removing all of it before discoloration or decay sets in requires a more aggressive method of desiccation than traditional air-drying alone can provide.

Pressing the freshly bloomed flowers, either in a dedicated press or between the pages of a book, is the traditional solution but yields mixed results. The drying process is still too slow, yellowing the centers of white varieties such as *'Frozen in Time'* and obscuring the delicate veins of *'Persian Lace.'* While darker varieties such as *'Ness' Crinkle Blue'* seem to hold their color, the double blooms greatly increase drying time, and when pressed, flatten into an indistinct and unattractive blob. These are disappointing rewards for a process requiring a

month or more of patience.

To truly capture the glory of a violet's blooms, immersion in silica gel is an inexpensive and effective solution. Burying the flowers in the fine granules of desiccant not only dries the center of the flower quickly, but preserves the dimensionality of semidouble and double varieties. A single pound is more than enough to cover all of the blooms from a post-show disbudding. Be careful when purchasing, that the granules are not too large, as they may leave impressions on the delicate petals and not nestle in the center of the flower. In only a few days the flowers can be removed from the silica, gently brushed clean and stored in an air-tight container for your future admiring.

Dried flowers are delicate, and their fragility means that if you wish to handle them frequently they are best encased in resin. While guides advise that flowers be coated in a spray resin before pourable resin to prevent yellowing, the dried blooms dance away with a sigh, and a spray canister will send them flying! Limiting the size of your resin pieces to small cabochons (small unfaceted gems) will reduce the heat produced from the curing polymer, allowing it to dissipate quickly enough to avoid discoloring the flowers. These sturdy preserved blossoms are ready to be used however your imagination sees fit, in everything from jewelry and bookmarks to serving as bloom examples at your next violet sale.





Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Rob's Scrumptious

Exhibited by: Anne Nicholas

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Standard

Contest Entry

How to Make a Rooting Box for Cuttings and Leaves

By Bonnie Harris

Supplies needed:

2 plastic shoe boxes

Perlite

4 small 2" plastic pots

Vermiculite

3 pieces of yarn about 12" long each

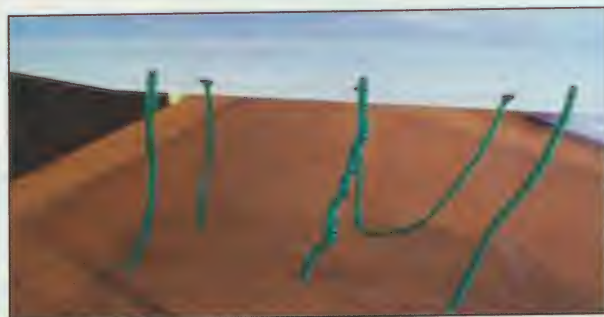
Thread the yarn thru the holes with the ends extending below the shoebox. A small crochet hook will help with this step.



Start by hot gluing the four small pots into the corners of one of the shoe boxes. This will be your reservoir.



Make six holes in the bottom of the second shoebox. I use a heated nail to make holes. This box will be your growing area.



Add about one inch layer of perlite into the growing box. Then top the perlite with a 2-3" layer of vermiculite.



Now you are ready to add water and start adding your cuttings or leaves to root. I use plain water only in rooting and the reservoir box will

hold about 2 quarts of water. Make sure the growing medium in the upper box is thoroughly wet. The water level in the reservoir should be just below the bottom of the growing box.



When I am doing different kinds of cuttings, I alternate different types so I can tell what each kind is, such as, variegated standard next to solid green miniature, or episcia next to African Violet. This is also a great way to root a lot of the same plant or leaf. There is room for about 10-12 standard leaves or a lot of semiminature or miniature leaves. Or a whole box of episcia solons.

If I am doing all one kind of cutting, but different varieties, such as all standard African Violets, then I use wooden craft sticks to make dividers between the rows of plants. Be sure that each leaf or cutting is labeled and if there are two or more of the same one, then I write on the back of the stick how many I put in so I can tell what is what when I am ready to pot up.



If the humidity in your growing area is high enough, you will not need to cover the box with plastic. My room stays about 60%. If the humidity is lower, then you can place a sheet of plastic wrap over the box loosely.

When it is time to pot up babies, they come out of the box pretty easy with a little assist from an orange stick (a manicurist stick and my choice of instrument instead of a sucker plucker). Just use the stick to loosen the roots from the vermiculite and lift out. Depending on how much vermiculite comes out on the roots, you may need to add more vermiculite to the box before the next round of cuttings/leaves go in. If you are not planning on adding more cuttings right away, just discard the water in the reservoir and allow the growing medium to air dry. Just add water and it will be ready to use when you need it again.

Rob's Combustible Pigeon

Exhibited by: Janet Sheaffer

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Semiminature



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Optimara Annabelle

Exhibited by: Erika Geimonen

Hybridized by: R. Holtkamp

Standard

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Marge Farrand – Ann Arbor, MI

'Mag's Free Will' (10854) 09/24/2016 (M. Farrand) Single-semidouble dark pink ruffled pansy/white eye, white top petals, purple fantasy edge. Medium green, plain, quilted. **Standard**

'Mag's Lovely Lady' (10855) 09/24/2016 (M. Farrand) Single-semidouble light lavender ruffled pansy/darker fantasy and rays, dark pink and purple fantasy tips on top petals. Medium green, plain, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

Kent Stork – Fremont, NE

'Ace of Clubs' (10856) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/plum eye. Dark green, plain/red back. **Standard**

'Ace of Diamonds' (10857) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white to light pink pansy/bright pink eye. Medium green. **Large**

'Ace of Spades' (10858) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/blue eye. Medium-dark green, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'Jack of Clubs' (10859) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/fuchsia-purple eye. Medium green, pointed. **Large**

'Jack of Spades' (10860) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/light to medium blue eye. Medium green, plain **Standard**

'Joker' (10861) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble plum-purple pansy. Medium-dark



green, quilted, glossy. **Standard**

'Kansas City Barbecue' (10862) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble coral-red pansy. Medium-dark green, quilted, glossy. **Standard**

'King of Clubs' (10863) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/dark plum eye. Medium-dark green, plain **Standard**

'King of Diamonds' (10864) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/fuchsia-pink eye. Medium-dark green, quilted, glossy. **Standard**

'Purpled Up' (10865) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Semidouble-double purple lightly frilled pansy. Dark green, plain. **Small standard**

'Queen of Clubs' (10866) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/reddish-plum eye. Medium green, glossy. **Standard**

'Queen of Diamonds' (10867) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Single-semidouble white pansy/pink eye. Medium-dark green, plain. **Standard**

'Ten of Clubs' (10868) 09/27/2016 (K. Stork) Semidouble-double white pansy/plum eye. Dark green, plain. **Standard**

REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

'Mag's Lovely Rainbow' (10627) Change "fuchsia edge" to "variable fuchsia edge."

Happy
New Year

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

Sometimes wonderful things are right in front of us, but for whatever reason we fail to see them. Such may be the case with the African Violet Society of America website. I will admit, it has been quite a while since I took a look at this website. I was amazed at what I found.

The Welcome page contains basic information explaining the site. A sidebar has links to each of the pages on the site. A slideshow of various violets proved to be mesmerizing.

The Board Directory is a PDF file that can be downloaded. An interesting feature here was the Organization Chart on pages 14-15. This has a format similar to a "family tree" showing who is responsible for various areas of AVSA operations. It is very easy to understand, and has clear explanations of relationships and responsibilities.

The Events tab has a complete list of upcoming African violet shows, Gesneriad shows, plant sales, instructional classes, and judging schools. Events were listed across the United States. There was an option to add an event, either online or by downloading and printing a PDF to mail.

The page to join the AVSA featured photos of members definitely having fun. There were no tags on the photos, but from a blue straw hat and giant sunglasses, to photos of smiling folks, it was obvious that everyone has a good time at AVSA events. A list of benefits of membership was included on this page. People wishing to join or renew memberships can do so online. Again, a PDF is a mail-in possibility. There is also an option to purchase gift memberships.

The Library tab proved to contain a wealth of information. Again, the information on this page had been updated recently. Videos are a big feature here. One of three videos titled Design Walkthrough Part One, was filmed at the recently held 2016 national convention. One can also access various club newsletters, yearbooks, and



show schedules here.

Click on the Local Clubs tab and immediately more pictures of people having fun are displayed. Again, a sidebar allows the searcher to find the region of the country they live in, and a click there leads to a list of local clubs. I clicked Area Nine, and while I am a member of a Colorado club, I did find that there is a Wyoming club, although it is a good six-hour drive away.

The Plants-Supplies Sources section had a huge list of vendors by state. Supplies and plants are available for purchase. There was also a link to options for advertising in this magazine. A DVD titled, *Meet the Commercials* was displayed on this page. It can be purchased through the AVSA store, along with books, CDs and DVDs, calendars and more.

The Magazine tab featured a photo of the current cover, with links to current articles. Brief summaries of the articles are provided. Access to an online index for all issues back to 1947 was also an option. Likewise, there was an index of photos in recent issues. A quick perusal showed a list of photos for the last 16 years.

The AVSA offers one or two scholarships a year. Applicants must have 24 semester or quarter credits, and must maintain a "B" or higher grade point. More information about this opportunity can be found under the Scholarship tab, as can options for making donations to the AVSA. There are many choices, from building maintenance and research to endowment funds.

Violets 101 contains all the information an individual needs to successfully grow, propagate and show violets. Button type links with pictures are the entryways to broad subjects. Design was a random test choice. This led to cross-links with the three 2016 Design Walkthrough videos mentioned previously. There were also options to learn about flower arranging and more. A side bar

had the answers to frequently asked questions, including the topic of scents in violets.

A complete website Table of Contents helps the viewer find anything they might want. Each main area of the website is listed, with numerous subheadings underneath.

If you, like me, have not explored our own website in a while, I strongly urge you to do so. I certainly could have written much, much more about this. The AVSA website should be the first one we recommend when anyone asks about African violets. www.avsa.org

BOYCE EDENS RESEARCH FUND

Karen Broadway - Chairman • 10028 N. 58th Lane • Glendale, AZ 85302-1334
Donations received from September 1, 2016 – October 31, 2016 • Total \$120.00



Multicolor - \$50-\$99

LuAnn Christensen, Eldridge, IA



Two Tone - \$25-\$49

Desert Sun AV Society, Phoenix, AZ



Thumbprint - Under \$25

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Sherin Boyd, St. John, NB E2M 1R9, Canada

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

July 1 - October 30, 2016

Janet Riemer • 256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534

Total this period: \$880.44



Geneva - \$100-\$499

Marge and Bill Farrand
West Texas African Violet Society



Multicolor - \$50-\$99

African Violet Council of Southern California

In memory of Hans Inpijn

Morgan Simmons

Jeri Anderson

Quad Cities African Violet Society (IA)



Two Tone - \$25-\$49

African Violet Club of Burlington County (NJ)

In lieu of judging fee for Paula Bal,

Tim Ferguson, Barbara Jones, Joan Santino,
and Janet Riemer

Sue and Charles Ramser

Linda Garramone

Spring Branch AVC (TX)

Tustana African Violet Society

In memory of Hans Inpijn

South Coast African Violet Society

In memory of Hans Inpijn

African Violet Club of Burlington County (NJ)

In memory of Peggy Mooney



Thumbprint - Under \$25

Suel Lai Yeung Rosetta

North Texas AV Judges Council

In memory of Alex Early

North Texas AV Judges Council

In memory of Martha Turner

JoAnne D'Angelo

Edye McIntosh

In memory of Elaine Re

North Texas African Violet Judges Council

In memory of Blanca Fuster

Brenda Walker

Question: What is a Gesneriad?

From *The African Violet*, Publication of the AV Association of Australia
Ruth Coulson, Editor

Most of us are aware that African violets are but one small part of the larger Gesneriad family. But do we know in what way the Gesneriads differ from other plants? This article was given to me many years ago by the late Dorothy Townsend. The source is unknown, but the information is useful all the same.

Answer: A family of plants with a geographical distribution around the world in the tropical and north and south temperate zones. They may be an herb, a shrub, a vine or a small tree. They may be miniature or large.

1. The calyx is five-parted, sometimes large and leafy.
2. The ovary is superior and one celled.
3. There are 2 to 4 stamens (the male part of the flower) which are usually fused in pairs, or may be all joined together in a ring or a square.
4. The flowers are generally borne in pairs on a peduncle (a flower stalk with multiple buds) or on pedicels (a flower stalk with a single bud) from the axils or nodes of the leaves.

5. The leaves are simple (undivided) and are not deeply notched.
6. Some are epiphytes (growing on limbs or trunks of trees): others are terrestrial (living in soil at ground level).
7. The seeds are numerous and very small.
8. They have a variety of forms of roots – fibrous, tuberous, and scaly rhizomatous.
9. The family shows great variety in means of propagation: seed, rhizomes, offsets, leaf cuttings, pieces of leaves, cuttings of tip growth, air layering.

While the African violet is the most widely grown member of the family, many of the others have been in active cultivation much longer. Achimenes have been known since 1756, Sinningia speciose has been in cultivation since 1817, Kohleria was introduced in 1844, Episcias were grown from seeds at Kew Gardens in England in 1845 and Smithiantha was developed commercially in 1857. Saintpaulia was not found in Africa until around 1892. So, you can see it was a sort of “Johnny –come-lately” in the Gesneriad family.

Contest Entry

Lemonade 5¢

By Wayne Tomczyk • Tucson AVS

You're driving down the street and you see this crudely printed sign in front of a card table on the corner, “Lemonade 5¢.” Who can ignore such a bargain? How can you say “no” to these enterprising children? So you stop, buy a glass (don't forget the tip!), and resume your driving as you sip the drink. But wait, there is some secret recipe at work here! Is it raspberry syrup? A spoonful of honey? A hint of oranges? Now your interest has been piqued and you decide to stop again tomorrow and ask about the recipe.

Maybe this is how we need to think about generating interest, and recruiting new members to our African violet clubs. Many clubs will ask their members to “harvest” violet leaves and offer

them for sale (\$1.00 per leaf) at our shows. Those who know something about growing will buy them, take them home and plant them, but never think about joining our club.

Think of this! We harvest the leaves and plant them in Dixie™ cups, print up a one-page Instruction Sheet on caring for the leaf, raising the babies, and transplanting the babies into their first pots.

Then we hang out our sign... **Lemonade African Violet Leaves – 5¢!**

Who could ignore such a bargain? This could very well cause someone to say, “Why not? I'll try it.” When they see how easy it can be, they just might make it a point to ask more, and maybe become your next new member! Lets give it a try!



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Sierra Sunrise

Exhibited by: Susan Shaw

Hybridized by: P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

Semiminiature



Coming Events

January 28, 2017 – California

Bay Area African Violet & Gesneriad Club
Launch BYA
1255 Allston Way,
Berkeley, CA 94702
Hours: 10 am – 2 pm
Member grown plants for sale
Hourly raffle for plants and growing supplies
Potting demonstration
Friendly members to answer your questions
Email: baavgc@gmail.com

February 25, 2017 – OKLAHOMA

African Violet Society of Greater Tulsa
Annual Show and Sale
Tulsa Garden Center
2435 S. Peoria
Tulsa, OK 74114
Saturday, February 25, 9 am – 4 pm
Info: John Carter johntcarter@valornet.com
(918) 355-8020

March 4 - March 5, 2017 - TEXAS

Spring Branch African Violet Club
37th Annual Spring Show and Sale

Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX 77004

March 4 – Show: 1 pm – 5 pm

Sale: 9 am – 5 pm

March 5 – Show and Sale: 10 am – 3 pm

Free Parking available at Judson Robinson Jr.
Community Center.

Workshop will be held

1:00 pm Saturday and Sunday

Info: Karla Ross (281) 748-8417

Email: kjwross@yahoo.com

March 11 & 12, 2017 – COLORADO

Rocky Mountain AV Council

Spring Show and Sale

March 11 - 9 am to 4 pm

March 12th - 9 am to 3 pm

Tagawa Gardens

7711 South Parker Rd.

Centennial, CO

(303) 690-4722

Information: Trudy Brekel

violetlady7@msn.com

(303) 452-9015

Violet Magic - Eight Tips for Successful Repotting

Kent and Joyce Stork

Many of us know someone who is a magician with plants. Everything seems to thrive in that person's care. The difference between a magic green thumb and a hapless brown thumb is often found in the subtle techniques of repotting. That's especially true with African violets. Sick violets often recover if repotting is done well. Healthy violets often become weak if repotting is done poorly. Great transplanting skills can make violets thrive. Here are some repotting tips to help you develop your green thumb.

Tip #1 Choose the right potting mix for your climate.

A quality African violet potting mix should provide good water-holding capacity and ample air pockets to guarantee healthy roots. Growing violets in a humid climate will require a higher percentage of large-particles such as coarse perlite and/or coarse vermiculite. In a very dry climate, it is helpful to use more water-holding components such as sphagnum peat moss, coconut coir, and coarse vermiculite. In simpler terms: 1) If you have many problems with root rot, add more perlite to your mix. 2) If your violets tend to dry out too quickly, add more peat moss to your mix.

Tip #2 Begin by moistening the potting mix.

Very dry potting mix may become air-borne and cause coughing. Dry potting mix draws moisture out of delicate violet roots, causing the roots to wither. Pre-moistening your potting mix will eliminate both problems. Add approximately 1 part warm water to four parts of potting mix and stir vigorously to force the peat to absorb the water. The end result should have a moist crumbly texture which is neither dusty nor dripping wet.

Tip #3 Never pack the mix as you repot.

Always pile the mix loosely around the cutting or plant. Packing down the soil eliminates air pockets, increases the chances of root rot, and will actually stunt the violet's growth. Air pockets in the mix will discourage rot diseases and allow roots to flourish. Adding water after repotting will compact the soil to some degree, but this is unavoidable. As needed, you may add a little more potting mix to the top of the pot to stabilize the plant.

Tip #4 Keep the pot small and shallow.

African violet roots generally do not grow deep or wide. In nature violet roots grow into the cracks in limestone or in mossy areas above the rocks, epiphytically. Violets grown indoors do not require a lot of room for the roots, so the pot should always be smaller than the plant. A confined area for roots provides a mild threat to the violet's existence, and as such it triggers blooming. At full bloom, show violets are expected to be three times wider than the pot in which they are grown.

Tip #5 Repot often.

Any potted plant has a lot of chemistry going on in its pot. Water, fertilizer, and potting mix components interact and change chemically over time - usually for the worse. Fresh quality potting mix provides an ideal environment for the roots, but after just a few months that environment may be much less satisfactory. The effects of these chemical changes are more dramatic in smaller pots. For best results, repot violets growing in pots smaller than 3" every 2-3 months; repot violets in 4" or larger pots every 6-12 months.

Tip #6 Avoid disturbing roots during repotting if you want to keep enjoying the flowers or buds.

Whenever the fibrous roots of violets are

disturbed, the roots tend to stop functioning. This may cause open flowers to collapse, and developing buds may open much smaller in size than usual. To preserve flowers and buds, lift the entire root ball from the pot and set it into a larger pot (this may be easier if the plant has been watered a day or so ahead of transplanting.) Add fresh potting mix around the edges as needed. This gentle move to a larger pot is sometimes called a "soft" transplant.

Tip #7 *If you must disturb the roots, remove buds, flowers, and older outside leaves.*

Sometimes it is necessary to pot a plant down (into a smaller pot) or to refresh the soil (removing all of the old mix). Disturbed roots will not function well until new roots are generated. Because flowers, buds and outer leaves will die from lack of water, simply remove them during the repotting process. This also allows you to bury the neck that is (or will be) exposed by those lost leaves. This harsher

repotting is often called a "hard" transplant.

Tip #8 *Reduce shock by enclosing repotted violets in a clear plastic bag or a dome.*

In average or dry climates, leaves will often wilt suddenly after a hard transplant. This is because the process of transpiration (the natural process of releasing water to the air through the leaves) continues whether or not roots are functioning. Transpiration may be reduced by increasing the humidity around the leaves. This can be done by enclosing the repotted plant in a closed environment (once the violet has been watered). Possible enclosures include clear domes, disposable plastic food containers, or large inflated clear plastic bags. Violets may stay safely inside these enclosures (out of direct sunlight) for a month or more, often without additional watering or need for attention. During that time it is normal to see condensed moisture inside the enclosure.

Happy Repotting!

Registration for Judging School for Students and Certificate Renewals

An AVSA judging school will be held on Wednesday, May 31, 2017, for AVSA members who wish to take their first judge's school and for judges who wish to renew their certificates. The lecture will be from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon and must be attended in order to take the exam. The test begins at 2:00 p.m. The registration fee is \$10.00 payable to AVSA. **AVSA membership cards must be presented at the door. Proof of three blue ribbons is required to take the test but not to audit the school.**

Name _____ AVSA Membership # _____

Address _____ Email Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone number _____

Judging Status: Student (1st exam) _____ Student Renewal _____ Advanced _____ Auditing _____

Jim Boyer will be the teacher. Complete and email (preferred) or snail mail the form (do not send payment) to Jim Boyer, 3852 Muirfield Ct., Palm Harbor, FL 34685; Phone: 727-871-2014; email: jasb39@gmail.com.

The registration fee of **\$10.00** applies to all who attend the judging school to take the test or to audit the class. There is a place on the Convention Registration Form to include this payment.

The test will be based on the latest edition of the AVSA Handbook, 13th Edition, revised in May, 2016, plus any updates.

Registration and payment for the judging school must be received by April 28, 2017.

Two Hortense Pittman Violets

Grown and Exhibited by: *Laurel Brown*

Photo Credit: Neil Lipson



Jolly Mars



Jolly Star

Board Nominees for 2017



**Richard Nicholas for
AVSA President**

AVSA continues to be a source of fun, friends, and support for my hobby, as it has for many years. It has been a pleasure to give back as a Vice President. My "real" life has changed significantly with retirement – now past two years! Now, I have more time for the violets and for AVSA! And the old adage about how busy you are in retirement is true!

You may have heard our story. Our first violet arrived in 1971 – forty-five years ago. Egad! I began growing seriously a few years later. My wife, Anne, joined me as a grower shortly thereafter. Now we have been growing together ever since. Our shelves are loaded with nearly 500 small ones, standards, trailers, streps, and a few more of the "cousins." We have shown at local, state, and national shows, and we both serve as Master Judges. I added hybridizing to my addiction, releasing five standards as the beginning of the Lonestar series. Now in retirement, I am beginning to add to the series.

We belong to the First AVS of Denton, TX, have both served as officers of the club, and also of the Lone Star African Violet Council. Before serving as a Vice President, I have served on the Awards, Research, Scholarship, Library, Tinari Fund Advancement, and Salary Committees, and one term as an AVSA Director. Serving as AVSA President would be a true honor. I look forward to working to the best of my ability with our leadership team as we work together to build a future for AVSA.



**Sue Ramser for
1st Vice President**

Sue Ramser, of Wichita Falls, Texas, has been a member of the First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls for forty-five years. She has served as show chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President and

President nine times.

As member of the Lone Star African Violet Council, Sue has served as newsletter editor twice, Parliamentarian, Secretary, Vice President, and President. She is also active in the North Texas African Violet Judges Council, having served as Corresponding Secretary, Secretary, Vice President and President twice.

Sue has served as a member of the AVSA classification committee, aide to the president for the 1988 AVSA Convention in Dallas, vice chairman of the AVSA Affiliate Committee, elected director, AVSA Sales and Promotion Table Volunteer Coordinator, Secretary of the Shows and Judges Committee, Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Policies and Procedures Committee, Treasurer, Secretary, Third Vice President and Second Vice President. Sue is an AVSA Honorary Life Member, AVSA Life Member, Master Judge, Teacher, and in 1993 compiled "Teaching Tools" and with Barbara Pershing completed the updated version in 2013. She also surveyed judges and compiled "Comments for Judges."

Sue is a graduate of the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas with a Bachelor of Business Administration. Her husband, Charles, is Professor Emeritus of Management at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls. They have four children: Chuck, Jr., Dr. Melissa Thomas, Christina, and Christopher, and three grandchildren. Sue's other interests include sewing, knitting, and genealogy.



**Susan E. Anderson
for 2nd Vice President**

Susan E. Anderson has loved growing African violets since she was twelve years old. Her first plant was 'Nortex's Moonlit Haven.' Yet, it was 'Double Black Cherry' that seriously hooked her on the hobby, with its outstanding blossoms and huge leaves. It is a plant that she is proud to say she still has today. When her collection got too large for her bedroom windowsill, her father built her a beautiful plant stand. That's when Susan's collection really grew.

Living in Arizona is a challenging environment for growing African violets. In 1997, Susan joined the local affiliate and AVSA. Over the years, she has enjoyed learning all the tips and tricks in the AVM. This year, Susan and Candace Baldwin founded the Copper State African Violet Club in Phoenix, Arizona, and Susan is serving as President. They are dedicated to teaching others about growing African violets by sharing their knowledge, experience, and enthusiasm.

Every year, Susan attends the national AVSA convention with her mother. Together, they have learned the joys and sorrows of flying and driving with show plants. Each trip is a new adventure. Since joining AVSA, and after attending a few conventions, Susan's involvement in AVSA continues to grow. She has served on a number of AVSA committees, and enjoys helping out wherever she is needed at convention. She previously served as an AVSA Director and currently compiles the annual Tally Time report. She is a Life member of AVSA and a Senior Judge. Susan has served the past two years as Third Vice President.

Susan lives and works in Phoenix, Arizona. She is a manager at the Arizona Department of Transportation. Susan is a registered Professional Engineer (PE) and Professional Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE). In her free time, she enjoys photography, playing piano, and traveling. She's always up for learning new things, seeking out new adventures, and having fun. Serving AVSA has afforded her all those opportunities and much, much more. Susan looks forward to continuing to promote and build AVSA for future substantiality.



Edna Rourke for Third Vice-President

Edna is President of the Naugatonic African Violet Society, Past President, and current Treasurer of the Nutmeg State AVS, and a member of the Mid-Atlantic AVS. She has served on the AVSA Board of Directors twice and is presently serving her last term as Treasurer of AVSA. She is also a member of the Finance, Salary, Convention, and Publications committees. Edna is the Chairman of the

AVSA Annual Luncheon Auction.

Edna is an Administrative Assistant for the Transportation Department of the Shelton Connecticut Board of Education. She and husband, Albert, are enthusiastic supporters of AVSA, and are very busy at the AVSA conventions. They have two grown sons, James and Thomas, and are blessed to have two wonderful daughters-in-law, Laurel and Beth. Edna enjoys promoting African violets and AVSA, and looks forward to continuing her service to AVSA.



Terri Post for Treasurer

I am a CPA and have been in the accounting industry for 26+ years. I currently am a Partner in a CPA firm located in Elk Point, SD, that specializes in governmental and non-profit auditing, along with tax return preparation. During my entire career, I have enjoyed working with many non-profit organizations.

In 2011, I agreed to help AVSA on a volunteer basis to assist in catching up on financial reporting for the years 2009, 2010 and 2011. I later was asked to serve as the AVSA Finance Chair, where I have prepared AVSA financial statements, annual budgets, and AVSA tax returns for the years 2009 to 2015, and have attended executive committee meetings for three years.

I have served as show co-chairman once for AVSA and twice for the Missouri Valley African Violet Council, and I currently hold the office as Treasurer for MVAVC. I have also been a member of several local AV clubs.

It is an honor to be nominated to serve as Treasurer for AVSA.



Mary Corondan for Secretary

Mary Corondan became interested in African violets due to the influence and encouragement of her mother and grandmother. She has grown violets since 1978 when she became a member of the Bluff City African Violet Club in Memphis, Tennessee.

Mary is now a member of the First Nighter African Violet Society of Dallas, where she has served in many offices and is currently President. She is also Treasurer of the North Texas African Violet Judges' Council. As an active member of Lone Star African Violet Council, Mary has served as President and Secretary.

In addition to serving the past two years as AVSA Secretary, Mary has been a member of the Building Committee, Awards Committee, and has served as a Director. She is currently Vice Chair of the Shows and Judges Committee, and is a Master Judge. Mary has served as the "And the winners are..." columnist in the *African Violet Magazine* for twenty years.

Having taught in public schools for twenty-three years, Mary is currently retired. She has a Master of Music Education degree from Arkansas State University. She and her husband, Bill, have one daughter and two grandsons.



Linda Ingle for Director

My obsession with African violets started almost a decade ago, with a few plants from the local grocery store. They were beautiful, and I found that I had an aptitude for growing them.

Of course, it was a very short leap to join the local club in Portland, Oregon. The members were wonderful and encouraging, so I didn't mind the three and a half hour drive over the mountains, and a hotel stay for each monthly meeting.

Due to the difficulty of getting to the meetings in the winter months, and the expense, I have started a club in my hometown of Bend, Oregon. Our club is new but has a fun group of people who enjoy growing, sharing, and learning, about African violets. I am still involved with the Portland club; helping with the organization of shows and sales. I have had wonderful mentors, and I am now a Judge.

I started out growing only Standards and have added a 16' by 20' greenhouse, to our home to accommodate my love of violets. I have just started adding, and enjoying, the beauty and wide variety of the semi's and mini's. I have also had the opportunity to actively serve, helping Amy at the Convention Registration desk, and selling for one of the vendors at

the AVSA conventions, since I started attending.

With my experience as a business owner and my love of technology, I plan to be actively involved in promoting the work of the African Violet Society of America.



Linda Kilby for Director

I am so pleased to have been nominated for the Board of Directors of AVSA. First, I want to thank the many friends of the Mid Atlantic African Violet Society for their encouragement.

I began to grow and enjoy African Violets while in college and working in a nursing home where I saw them growing on the windowsills in the hallways. Over the years I would buy new ones from time to time when those I had died, but I never knew the history, and never knew that they had names! More than nine years ago, while shopping in the Springfield Mall I looked from the second floor down to see tables full of beautiful plants that I thought were for SALE! To my surprise, I learned that this was a Show and the plants were grown by club members! Barbara Jones was the President and she invited me to join their club. Imagine that, a club where people grew and showed African violets!

This was the beginning of many beautiful friendships, traveling to and participating in shows. I have served as the Secretary, Vice President, President, and currently as Treasurer of the AVS of Springfield, Delaware County, Pennsylvania; Classification Chair of AVSA National Show, 2011 in Cherry Hill, and currently Secretary of MAAVS. I have learned so much from the wonderful friends I have made while attending AVSA, MAAVS, and local affiliate club shows. Becoming a "Philly Girl" has been so exciting and helped me to meet many new friends. I have even gotten my husband, Willie Powell, involved. He helped us when we traveled to Williamsburg and Raleigh to deliver the cookbooks that were auctioned as a part of the fund-raising for the 2011 AVSA Convention. As a Board Member I bring the ability to organize, lead and work as a team member to help others learn more about the hobby that we enjoy so much!

LINDA K in PA is my tag on line. My other life involves working with young families as a registered

Dietitian with a PhD in Public Health. I enjoy helping the community at large and especially students learn more about the world of Public Health Nutrition.



Sandy McIntosh for Director

Sandy McIntosh has been an AVSA member for eleven years and is a Senior Judge. Sandy says that she got interested in African violets because her

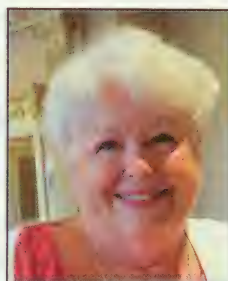
Grandmother usually had a few on the windowsill in her kitchen and she liked the blossom colors and leaves of the plants. When Sandy purchased her first home, she bought two violets from the home improvement store and put them in her window. "I usually managed to kill them within a few months, but I always went back and bought more," she says.

When Sandy transferred with Kroger from South Carolina to the Cincinnati area in 2003, she didn't really know anyone, so she decided that she would seek out people with similar interests in order to meet people. After going to the AVSA website and finding out that there was an African Violet Club in Cincinnati, Sandy contacted the President of the club and started attending meetings. There, she says, "I really got the bug about growing to show." Sandy now grows around two-hundred plants, and is currently President of the Cincinnati AVS, and past Treasurer of the Ohio State AVS.

Sandy resides in Covington, Kentucky, and is recently retired from the Kroger Co. after twenty-eight years as a Training and Employee Development Manager. She has been active in Ronald McDonald House and Crayons to Computers. Her "family" consists of three spoiled rotten, rescued Cocker Spaniels, who are her fur babies. Sandy also has a passion for helping animal rescue organizations. Sandy is an avid golfer and plays every chance she gets, sometimes, she admits, to the detriment of her plants. Since retiring, Sandy has begun to develop other hobbies around music, photography, and cooking.

Her words to live by include:

- Live your personal principles even though others may change around you
- Develop strong friendships and depend on them
- Worry less about you succeeding and more about creating circumstances to help others succeed.



Renee Wilson for Director

I have been growing African violets for over forty years. I got my first violet when I was in college and was instantly hooked! I don't think that from that moment on, there has ever been a time when I didn't have at least a few African violets in my home.

To be nominated as a Director for the Board of AVSA is a great honor and I am looking forward to serving our Society in that capacity. I have been a member of our local affiliate, the Central California AVS, for many years.

Over those years, I have served as President, vice-president and Secretary, the office I currently hold. I also belong to several other African violet societies and am a Member and Vice President of the Northern California Council of African Violet Societies, I am also a member of the Northern CA Judges' Council, where I became a Senior Judge in October of 2016.

I have been a nurse for forty years and have been working in the same small, local, but very busy, hospital operating room for thirty-seven years; retiring in September of 2016. I love being a nurse and growing African violets has been a wonderful balance to a demanding and exacting career.

My other interests include making glass beads (lampworking), jewelry making, cooking, traveling, and reading. I enjoy every aspect of the African violet world, from watching a leaf push up tiny baby leaves to entering mature plants and designs in our local shows each year! I grow over 200 plants and enjoy them immensely! My new favorites are the Russian and Ukrainian cultivars, but I have to admit to having a soft spot for the vintage violets, as well.

I have attended the last three AVSA conventions, which so far have been the highlight of my African violet experience.

I have made so many wonderful friends from all over the United States because of our mutual love of this charming and beautiful little plant. I can't wait to see what the 2017 convention in Orlando will bring!

Container Gardens: A guide for the Novice Designer

By Dolores Gibbs

If you are a novice designer of a container garden, my first and best advice to you is to **always read the schedule**. Most schedules will tell you the height of your dish gardens. Usually it is 24" for large dish garden and 12" for small dish gardens. (At one time the height of your tree was to be 1 1/2 the width of your container. That rule no longer applies; you want it to look natural.) This also applies to the terrariums.

Some designers use regular potting soil, but because the perlite is hard to hide I use long fiber sphagnum moss, which I pour boiling water over and allow to cool before using. Although AVSA no longer specifies what you are to depict, most affiliate and council shows still tell you what it is you are to interpret. Even at National Shows, think about the location, and try to depict something of that area. Are you near an ocean, lake or mountain, a seashore?

All entries in design must have a 3x5 card that displays the name of plants and material in that design and if they allow a second card, tell those viewing your container garden what it is that you tried to depict. I have always been taught that your eye should go to the African violet, or violets, that must be included in your designs. When using more than one violet in container gardens, my advice to you is to use two of the same variety or same color. Plants must be taken out of their pots before placing them in your container garden.

Know that forty points of your total score is for landscape design; picture that mountain scene, or one that contains water. Remember that you can use melted paraffin for your water. Melt a small amount in an old pan on the stove or in the microwave. Watch it carefully and as soon as it is melted have a preformed foil to pour it in. Let it harden and there you have your river, lake or sea shore. To depict a sea shore add a little sand to sep-

arate the water from the rest of the design.

Your design should not have just one level. Start by planting your tree at the back of your design and then lower your plants as you work toward the front.

If you are trying to depict a mountain scene, use small rocks or small pieces of driftwood to add variety. Let water run from the rocks by using a glue gun, this takes a little practice but adds so much to your design. In horticulture, all plants must have been grown by the Exhibitor, but in the Design section, plants may be purchased by those entering the designs. Small plants are hard to find and when you do find them, try to propagate them. A little fern might cost several dollars at a convention but they can be divided and kept under lights in containers that were bought with salad makings in them. Small herbs can be used, but grow rapidly and can be placed in the garden after a show.

Plants should be those that are compatible when grown in the same environment and account for twenty points of your total score, never use cacti or succulents with African violets. If we want to use accessories in our gardens they should fit in the class title and should never stand out. Put them where the viewer would need to look for them and perhaps on the second card hint as to what might be hiding in your garden. They must be contained within the planting and not beside it on the table. Condition is also very important and here too they account for 20 points. Remove any yellowed foliage from the plants, especially the African violet. As you put your gardens together place a little pot where you intend to put your violet. Before entering your design, place your violet, making sure there are no spent blossoms or marred leaves. Container gardens should appear as though they are established gardens so, when finishing you might use moss to cover bare areas.

Although cultural perfection and relation to container are each 10% of your total score, they are very important to consider. You want nice green plants, and need to keep them to scale with your container, using containers that do not stand out, or take away from your design. In dish gardens plants can touch the rim of your container but do not let them touch the table.

Have fun with your container gardens. Isn't

that why we do them? Take any advice the judges might write on your entry card to help you know what might have been done to improve your total score. Take it home and place it where it will get bright light but no direct sunlight and you will be able to enjoy your container garden for a long time. If doing the class for terrariums, try replacing the African violet with another plant, as they usually only continue to bloom for a short time.



Contest Entry

Temptation vs Streps

By Donna Vogelpohl

On a recent vacation, traveling to a far-away land, I endured many temptations. Tickets were purchased in February; tickets were limited and we scored ours for the August trip! This was a dream come true. It was the last Thursday of our vacation, for Friday we were heading home.

We are up early and I am ready! I am in Newbury England and I have arrived at Highclere Castle, yes, the setting for Downton Abbey! I am finally getting to see this fantastic castle; my dream come true. My mother's family is from England and I am with my cousin, John. As we turn into the drive (which is very long) I look out the window and see nothing but lovely green rolling grass, and then, the castle comes into view. It is no hallucination. I am really going to be a guest at Downton Abbey, aka Highclere Castle!

I was excited, joining my family, waiting to go through those doors. I must tell you NO pictures are allowed; *ok I'll buy the book*. The inside looks satisfyingly like the well-known television show. But here is

where my temptation comes in: lovely flowers in two of the rooms are streps, yes, *Streptocarpus* plants, some of the *best* I have ever seen.

They had so many of these beautiful streps. I wonder if I might just take one leaf? One leaf? No one will miss one leaf. I could give each of you a great gift that would harken back to Downton Abbey. My strep-growing friends would be thrilled and I would be a hero!

Should I ask a lovely room host for a leaf or just snip one off? Oh yes, she would think I was nuts, although we violet and strep-growing folks are a bit off (and I am no exception). When I go into the second room there is another Strep, bigger and better than the last...surely just a tip of a leaf would not be missed...

The story ends with me erring on the side of caution and not risking a jail cell. I did manage to obey the rules, I took **no** pictures and I took **no** streps. In hindsight the well-known grower, Diblies, is in England, and that will be on the list for the next trip. I highly recommend a trip to Highclere Castle.



John and Donna in front of Downton Abbey.

Silent Prayer

Exhibited by:

Richard Nicholas

Hybridized by: K. Stork

Large



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Buckeye Nocturne

Exhibited by:

Sandra Skalski

Hybridized by: P. Hancock

Large

Photo Credit: Neil Lipson



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Jolly Andrea
Exhibited by: Anne Nicholas

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

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One area in growing African violets that seems to reemerge in discussions on a regular basis is the comparison of Nature versus Nurture. This means, is the final growth of a plant determined by its genetics (Nature) or more by its cultivation (Nurture)? This topic has been hotly debated in scientific communities, not just in Botany or Horticultural Science for many years. The pendulum continues to swing back and forth on which area has the most influence. In African violets, both are important, but it's difficult to give more credit to one area versus the other.

Nature is the genetic potential of the plant as determined by the DNA and genes within the nucleus of the cell, and to a lesser extent the DNA of cellular organelles such as the chloroplast and the mitochondria. The DNA or genetic potential is inherited from the parents. The nuclear DNA is from both parents while the chloroplast and mitochondria DNA is from the mother or the seed parent. DNA can be mixed, sliced, switched around, mutated or changed in other subtle ways. Scientists have recently learned that many mutations are the result of changes in the control mechanisms in the DNA. These mutations are not so much a change in the actual DNA instructions, but in the guidelines on how those instructions are expressed. This is a fascinating new area in the field of genetics and we are only starting to understand the importance of these genetic control mechanisms in plants. Many traits in African violets such as flower color, leaf shape and plant size are clearly under the influence of the DNA, or the Nature component of the plant.

Nurture refers to the environmental influences on the organism. How does the organism respond to the type and amount of light, water and fertilizers that it is given. This is especially critical at different points in the organism's life span. The lack of vital nutrients can result in stunted growth or smaller size



regardless of the DNA instructions for size. Nature or the DNA component of a plant may provide the instructions, but the Nurture or environment provides the raw materials for expressing those instructions. A change or deficient in either area can change the expression of the plant's physical traits.

The interaction between Nature and Nurture is one of the reasons that our hobby can be both fascinating and frustrating. We can choose plants for their Nature or genetic potential, but depending on the Nurture or cultural conditions we provide, the final results can be spectacular and award winning, or disappointing. Show winners must have knowledge of both Nature and Nurture. They must choose plants with the best genetic potential, but also pay close attention to the culture or care their plants receive. It's not that one area is more important to the other, but knowledge and careful application of both Nature and Nurture are needed in order to be fully successful.

Q: Many of the Russian cultivars are known for their large spectacular flowers. Is this due to their genetics, or are they using something in their culture techniques to increase flower size?

A: This question has been sent in several times over the last several years as more growers become familiar with the Russian cultivars and more become available. In my opinion, the answer lies more in the genetics (Nature) than in the culture (Nurture). It is possible to increase flower size or develop more spectacular color combinations through the application of genetics and selective breeding. If you select for a trait for several generations, you can generally improve that trait. Given what I've seen with the Russian cultivars, I believe this is how they've developed their spectacular results. They've hybridized using standard genetics and continually selected for these characteristics.

I've also been asked if their secret might be in the application of plant hormones such as the Gibberellic Acids such as GA₃. While the application of Gibberellic Acid compounds are known to increase the size of fruits such as grapes, the effect on flowers has not been clearly demonstrated. In order to have large spectacular flowers, however with each blooming cycle or in multiple generations of cuttings from the same plant, the hormone would have to be *continuously* applied. That is, if Nurture or culture was the answer, you would have to continuously supply that same culture. Since the Russian cultivars continue to bloom with large flowers each generation or when propagated by leaf cuttings in this country and other areas outside Russia, application of hormones would not appear to be the reason for the flower's large size. If the trait for a plant continues regardless of the Nurture, then you are left with Nature or the genetics as being the cause.

Q: If a hybridizer was going to apply Nature or genetics in looking for ways to develop new miniature plants, do the species offer any help?

A: There are several potential species plants that might be used for hybridizing for miniatures. Using the older names, *S. pusilla* and *S. inconspicua* are potential candidates. However, neither is currently available in cultivation and the status of *S. inconspicua* is unclear. This plant may already be extinct in the wild. Of the plants available in the United States, I'd suggest working with *S. shumensis*. This species does have some genetic resistance to hybridizing with other plants, but I've seen publications that reported success in crossing on to this species. It just took some persistence to get seed pods. One caution, however, *S. shumensis* frequently self-pollinates so care must be taken to ensure that the offspring are hybrids. The flowers are somewhat bell-shaped would could be an interesting trait to develop in more cultivars.

A lesser known species clone is the plant *S. brevopilosa* clone Grusell or Nguru Mountain. This is a miniature trailer that is very small growing and has even smaller flowers than *S. shumensis*. This clone was originally collected

in low elevation near a waterfall, growing on a rock covered moss. It will grow under normal cultural conditions for most African violets, but it does appreciate higher humidity. The leaves are somewhat similar to *S. velutina* in appearance which could be an added attraction for hybridizers. I've not tried hybridizing with this clone, but I have no reason to suspect that it would not be fertile if used in a hybridizing program. It is a shy bloomer, but it does not require the drastic night time temperature changes of other species such as *S. goetzeana*. Breeding to small rosette plants could produce offspring with a tendency to sucker since this clone is a trailer, but persistence in hybridizing could eliminate or hopefully reduce this tendency as well.

Q: There have been a number of pictures on Facebook recently of African violet leaves that are starting babies at unusual locations on the mother leaf, such as on the edges of the leaf blade. Is this culture, or is this genetic?

A: African violets tend to start new plantlets at points of damage. The cells near the veins in particular, are often stimulated to respond to the damage by starting a new plantlet. In our traditional way of taking leaf cuttings, the responding cells are near the cut on the leaf petiole and the new plantlets start at the base of the petiole.

If the leaf blade is cut in other places, or damaged in other places, new plantlets can start in other areas such as on the veins of the leaf blade etc. It is possible to actually cut a large leaf into wedges or sections and get new plantlets to start at the base of the cut veins. Leaf wedges do have a higher tendency to rot; so many growers don't cut their leaves into pieces when starting new plantlets, but careful growers can often extend the number of cuttings obtained from a single leaf by using this method. The practice of using cut veins to produce new plantlets is very common in other plants, for example, begonias.

Girl foliage leaves, especially those cultivars with double doses of the dominant girl leaf trait will often spontaneously start baby plants along the leaf margins or other areas without the stimulation of damage to the veins. The mutation that produces

girl foliage causes the cells on the leaf margins to - divide more frequently than needed. The extra cells pile up, producing the wavy margins and lobbing often seen on girl foliage. This is probably due to a mutation in the control mechanisms of cell division, one of those DNA instructional changes in gene expression. The shock of cutting the leaf sets off hormone changes throughout the entire leaf. In

addition to encouraging the development of new plants at the cut petiole or at other damaged veins, the cells on the leaf margins sometimes respond by starting a new plantlet too. If the plantlet gets large enough, they can be detached and used to also regenerate a new baby plant. All in all, it's an interesting interaction between the genetics (Nature) to the shock of cutting a leaf (Nurture).



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Mini Papa

Exhibited by: Susan Arano

Hybridized by: H. Pittmann

Semiminiature



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Optimara Yellowstone

Exhibited and Photographed by: Neil Lipson

Hybridized by: Holtkamp

Standard

S. 8 clone
Cha Simba

Exhibited by:
Candace Baldwin



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Jolly Orchid

Exhibited by:

Debbie McInnis

Hybridized by: H. Pittman
Miniature

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Sugar Bear Blues

Exhibited by: Kenneth Rein

Hybridized by: D. Ness

Semiminiature

Genetically Modified African Violets

By Bruce Pearson

Most people are turned off with the mention of GMO's (Genetically modified organisms). But they have not an inkling of what is happening, only relying on hearsay that it is something that is automatically, undeniably, dangerously bad. The majority of people do not have a clue as to some of the benefits, just citing it is against the laws of Nature.

I will agree it can be dangerous, and there could be some unforeseen consequences. But put in good hands the benefits are huge. Not that I am an expert by any means, but I will try to explain briefly what it is, and then suggest an application that could be done with African violets.

As I understand it, it is simply (or really not so simply) placing a gene or group of genes present in an organism to another organism that does not have the characteristic that would be useful.

An example of this would be plants that have resistance to Roundup, the total weed killer. Have you ever used Roundup? It is a huge improvement over old chemicals that actually salted the ground to kill weeds. Many people are turned off with even the name but I have used it for years, and still have all fingers and toes intact. Our dogs and cats are all alive and healthy, and our property is still green and fertile. It would be a jungle of weeds without it. I think my brain waves are still operating normally, but that is for someone else to decide.

Anyway, back to the topic. For some reason, unknown to me (possibly because I use Roundup and my brain waves are effected) Roundup does not get rid of the weed known as "nutgrass." Everything around it is killed but the nutgrass remains green and healthy. The gene that causes this was isolated years ago and "transplanted" into cultivatable plants. The result, is a GM plant able to tolerate Roundup and not be killed. This saves millions if not billions of dollars annually in hand weeding, and back breaking labor. This is just an example of Genetically Modified engineering. It is a distinct asset. But I must admit not all GMO are so clear cut.

But you get the picture.

One more story before getting to African violets. Years ago, Burpee Seed Company offered \$10,000 to anyone able to produce a white marigold. I sure needed the 10K but had absolutely no idea how to go about it. Not until several years later and white marigolds were in existence, the 10K had been awarded and probably spent, did I suddenly realize how easy it would have been to produce it. The answer was in the middle of nowhere in the highlands of Mexico. Several of my "plantaholic" friends, and I, were out collecting plants there, to be introduced back into the states, and there it was, a wild white marigold in a virtual field of yellows and oranges. Immediately, I realized here was the plant that contained the gene that with a couple of crosses and back crosses could produce a white marigold of the size Burpee was looking for. No genetic engineering involved. Well it was an hour late and a couple of dollars short. But since then I have been keenly aware of genetic variation and the potential that it holds.

So what does this have to do with African violets? What do African violets lack that would be desirable? For one, people enjoy something that smells good. There appears to be no species of African violet that is scented. So unless a mutation occurs (and not even sure this is even a remote possibility) we would have to rely on genetically modifying a plant and then go from there. May I suggest using an Old Garden Rose, or Lady of the Night orchid?

The alternative and another remote possibility ... anyone up to exploring the Usambara mountains in Tanzania with me to look for an African violet with scent? Who knows, we might just find a new species as well.

Bruce Pearson

Tropical World Nursery
Loxahatchee Groves
3rd World Republic of Florida

TRAILING GESNERIADS

By Leonie Chirgwin

From the *Newsletter* of the Early Morn African Violet Group, Inc. • Australia

Aeschynanthus, *Columnea*, *Codonanthe*, *Nematanthus*, *Episcia*, *Alsobia*, *Streptocarpella*, *Neomortonia* and *X Codonatanthus*.

All these plants, except *Episcia*, will grow outside in a protected position (such as a covered pergola, shade house or veranda) in Victoria.

Episcias are tender plants that will only survive inside in a warm situation. If your home is centrally heated and kept warm 24/7 in winter you can grow Episcias on shelves or window sills in African Violet potting mix. If your home is cool in winter you will need to grow your Episcias covered. Episcias grow by extending stolons, much like strawberries. Start a stolon with a short stem in a small pot of damp AV mix. As this stolon develops, remove any stolons it grows. If you want to grow your *Episcia* as a hanging basket, once the stolon has grown to 3" to 4" (7cm to 10cm) in diameter, pot it into a basket and then allow stolons to develop and hang down.

If you want your *Episcia* as a bowl, pot your 3" to 4" (7cm to 10cm) plant into a shallow bowl. As its stolons grow, curl them around the main plant, and pin them down into the potting mix. This way Episcias can be wick-watered, or grown in a covered container.

Episcias are grown not for their flowers, but for the colors of the foliage.

Alsobias are plants that also extend by stolons, but they can be grown outside. Similar to Episcias, begin with a stolon, pin later stolons into the potting mix, then let them hang down. Alsobias have green foliage, and white heavily fringed flowers, some of them have purple dots.

Now – the *other* Trailing Gesneriads. The most important thing to do with Trailing Gesneriads is to frequently pinch out the two leaves at the end of every trail quite early in the cuttings lives, and from then on. The aim is to create a basket full of foliage that has a soccer-ball shape.

Aeschynanthus, *Columnea*, *Codonanthe* and *Neomortonia* grow outside with some protection. If

they get cold they will drop leaves and cause bare stems.

Streptocarpella and *Nematanthus* are hardier, and will grow well with less protection. *Neomortonia* is a softer plant that will die back in winter, and freshen up in the warmer months (probably best grown inside in Melbourne).

All these plants can be started from seed or leaves, but the quickest way to develop a beautiful plant is to use cuttings. Use AV mix or 1:1 AV mix and top quality commercial potting mix. Use any fertilizer suitable for Gesneriads. Episcias and Alsobias will start from stolons. The others all start from 4" to 5" (10cm to 13cm) cuttings, perhaps dipped in Clonex (but not necessarily) and placed in a small but taller pot such as a disposable plastic picnic cup in damp mix. You will need

about 6 cuttings per basket. You can enclose each cutting in a closed freezer bag and place it in a warm spot. Seed pods or fruit of these plants are sometimes berries like a large bead (in various colors) or a long bean shaped pod that splits open.

Description of flower colors:

Episcia: usually brick red, but can be pink or blue.

Alsobia: white, sometimes with purple dots.

Aeschynanthus: large, usually red/orange/yellow.

Columnea: large red/orange/yellow or sometimes pink.

Codonanthe: small white, sometimes pink, with brown in the throat.

Nematanthus: pink, red, white, orange.

Neomortonia: red

Streptocarpella: blue, mulberry

There are some lovely plants that have been hybridized by crossing *Codonanthe* and *Nematanthus*. These are registered as *XCodonatanthus*. They have thinner stems, small leaves and lovely small flowers in sunset colors.

There are some Trailing Gesneriads that are not well known here in Victoria; maybe we should start growing them in the future. They include *Codonanthopsis*, *Sarmienta*, *Agalmyla*.

Back to Our Roots – Part Two

By Maureen Pratt
Maureen@maureenpratt.com

Good roots are the foundation of every healthy plant, but for even the most experienced grower, sometimes problems arise. This part of “Back to Our Roots” covers some common root problems and ways to fix them, with some novel and new ideas about how we nurture roots from cuttings to plantings.

Troubles with Roots

Disturbing the roots during repotting (excessive paring, pulling, or scraping) can cause a plant’s growth to slow or stunt, which can be disheartening for the home grower and devastating for someone who grows to show. It can also be the beginning of other problems, leading to misshapen leaves, a tight crown, other visible signs of trauma and, at the very worst, loss of the plant.

Besides physical problems, pests such as soil mealy bugs can cause a breakdown of the all-important energy and nutrient transfer that occurs between roots and plant tissue, and, if left untreated, kill the plant and infect whole collections.

Good growers who keep their eyes on the outer appearance and growth health of a plant can usually spot root trouble early.

Dale Martens, an experienced hybridizer and award-winning grower of many gesneriads, including AVs and *Streptocarpus*, says, “The first thing I look at above the soil is the color of the leaves. If the leaf color is anywhere near yellow, and they’re not really old leaves, then I worry about the roots.”

Even more subtle discoloration can signal trouble to the expert eye. Pat Hancock says, “When you judge, you should be able to tell if a plant has trouble with its roots. A lot of times, plants that have yellow around the leaf edges probably have problems with roots.”

Mel Grice first noticed green algae in his pots,

then saw plants begin to die one by one. He assessed his growing process and found the pH of his water was “way off the charts in alkalinity.”

“My roots were just black,” he says. Mel traced his water problem to a new product Nature’s Little Miracle, that his plumber had installed. When he changed back to reverse-osmosis water filtration, the problem disappeared. “I have great roots again. If your plants start to get yellow, it’s very important to check the pH of your water.” A pH that is higher than 7.0 is considered alkaline.

A plant that has drooping leaves and moist soil might have root rot, a condition that can be caused by overwatering (and, thus, starving the roots of oxygen) and/or a fungal infection that is triggered when the plant is overwatered.

“Root rot is a thing I address frequently when people approach me about their Streps or Sinningias,” says Dale Martens. “The main thing I suggest is, after removing roots and washing that bottom of what’s left of the root area, they pot in moist perlite/vermiculite (50/50) over a layer of soilless mix in a covered container. When the plant begins making healthy roots, initially the roots go through the perlite/vermiculite and soon reach the soilless mix. I also suggest that they just keep two to four leaves on a Strep or just the crown on an AV, rather than try to keep the whole plant.”

For a Sinningia, says Dale, “Cut off the rotted part of the tuber and then place the open wound next to perlite not mixed with vermiculite (that has soilless mix under it). Roots rarely emerge from the wound. They usually emerge from the papery ‘skin’ of the tuber. So, all



Rotted part removed



Prepare the cup



Open wound next to perlite



Plant recovery

I'm trying to do is help the wound scab and allow for new roots to emerge from the rest of the tuber."

Soil mealy bugs is another scourge of a plant's root system.

"If the leaves are yellow," Dale says, "I look for mealybugs first. If I don't see the mealybugs, I leach and repot. The reason I leach first is that unless you wash everything off those roots, that's old soil with the old fertilizer salts still in it."

If the problem is soil mealy bugs, isolating and treating the plant with one of several available products can get rid of them, but if the infestation is dramatic, it is better to discard the plant.

Whenever you are working with your plants, cleanliness is important to stop the spread of fungal infections or pests.

Paula Bal, an AVSA judge and multi-award winning grower, says, "Keep the area you work in clean, and disinfect the tools you work with."

Novel Ideas

As AV and other gesneriad growers become

more experienced, they discover their own personal ways of handling roots through propagating plants, potting, and preparing for show.

Mel Grice's gesneriad collection includes about fifty genera, but his schedule can sometimes be so hectic that he might not have time to pot up the plantlets growing from leaves that he "incubates" in Solo cups placed in plastic bags. But if started carefully, the roots and plantlets supporting them will survive.

"In my starter mix, I put a bit of vermiculite because it helps the finer roots on younger plants, and keeps the soil moist," he says. "I start everything in solo cups in plastic bags. I put the leaf in the soil mix and use Clonex, liquid rooting compound, in the water to wet my soil mix. I put the individual Solo cups on layers of newspaper for 10 or 15 minutes to soak up the excess moisture, then put each of them in a 4"x6" bag. They put up babies, and when they come up an inch or two high, they go into suspended animation. Sometimes, they're there for 5 years until I can get to them!"

Dale Martens considers the show schedule when deciding what to do about a rootball.

"If the show is within six months," she says, "I don't touch the rootball, I don't break it up or slice it. I leach it and put it in a larger pot, just make the hole and drop it in. If I have more than six months, I might cut off the bottom third and maybe even half an inch around the sides. Then, I hold the violet by the neck and whack it against the trash can to get off as much soilless mix as I can. After I've transplanted it to the new pot, it gets into a baggie that's taller than it is, but I don't zip it closed. I make sure there's some water in the bottom of the baggie."

"I leave it there for a week to ten days. Then, I slowly acclimate it to room air by slitting down the side of the baggies."

Sometimes a different look at a generally accepted practice yields surprising results. Dr. Jeff Smith's groundbreaking work in AV genetics, which he shares in his column in AVM, has helped generations of growers and hybridizers better understand the intricacies of plant traits. Studies on AV roots are scant, but Dr. Jeff has also applied his scientific expertise to two of these.

"One rooting study looked at whether it made

a difference if you scraped the stems of trailers to encourage root growth," he says, "and the other study looked at whether it made a difference to root growth if you used rooting powder hormone when trying to root trailer stems."

In both cases, the results might seem surprising: Scraping trailers' stems, "was as likely as not to interfere with the rooting system," and the rooting powder, "didn't hurt, but it didn't speed anything up in any significant way."

Taking the idea of how *Saintpaulia* species grow in the wild, Dr. Jeff has had success growing in other than regular azalea pots.

"I've been experimenting with growing the species with chunks of limestone chips with soil mix on there so roots can go around the limestone rock," he says. "I have had real good success with species growing in pan pots. Trailers do really well in these, and trailer species do wonderfully."

Some other gesneriads seem to do well in shallower vessels, too. Gesneriad grower Jay Sespico recently showed *Primulina* 'Lydia' and *Primulina repanda* 'Cheritopsis' at the Gesneriad Society National Convention. Both were grown on wicked plastic dinner-sized plates on which he put a mix of vermiculite, perlite, and grow cubes.

"What got me growing this way was a lady in Denver named Barb Lovins. She grew *Petrocosmeas* on dinner plates," says Jay, "When I saw pictures coming back from China of how they grow on rocks, their roots kind of gather things that blow or fall their way. *Primulinas* grow on rocks with very shallow substrate, and [with this method], the roots spread out to the edge of the potting material. Now, all the rosette-growing gesneriads I grow on plates, and all the more shrub-like gesneriads, I grow in pots."

He hasn't tried this method with African violets, yet, but is optimistic.

"I think they'll grow better than people think they will," he says. "In the wild, they grow in a shallow substrate of soil."

The Root of It All

Part of good growing is taking time to examine the health of your plants' roots, before you notice problems "up top."



Wicked plastic dinner plates



Mix of vermiculite, perlite, and grow cubes



Rosette - growing gesneriad grown on plastic dinner plates

Experienced AVSA judge and award-winning grower Barbara Burde says, "Periodically, every grower should lift their plants out of their pots and look at the roots. See what's going on there. Make sure they look healthy."

Learning about new techniques from experts, and trying them out slowly to see if they will work under your conditions, can help a good grower become an excellent grower.

But, says Paula Bal, "One of the biggest tips to an overall healthy plant is to keep your conditions of growing, water, temperature, soil mix, and repotting consistent. Don't keep changing your methods."

Whether grown in pots or on plates, African violets and their gesneriad cousins all benefit from roots that are healthy, well-nourished, and able to get enough oxygen to support the plants' growth and bloom cycles

No, they're not the prettiest appendage on our plants. But they are the foundation from which every "ooh," "ah" and blue ribbon comes!

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

During my conversation with Dale Martens,

she mentioned that she accidentally stumbled upon a different and potentially novel way to more quickly root cuttings.

"A *Kohleria* got too tall, so I cut it off and put it in a hole in a reservoir," says Dale. "A couple of weeks later, I looked at it and was surprised – it was full of big healthy roots. It bloomed, too, instead of dropping its buds! Since then, I've tended to root things in old algae water. It has to be nasty full of algae. You can even have spring-tails jumping all over."

Intrigued, I found some algae water, lopped off the tip of a *Kohleria*, and put the cut end into the water. The result? Maybe the subject of another article!

Maureen's website is www.maureenpratt.com



Tossed Out: Violet Tragedy That Could Have Been Avoided!

By Tim Panzl

Today, tragedy struck our local neighborhood hardware store. One full flat and a half of no I.d. Violets proved too much work for the incompetent staff. The plants were allowed to dry up, go limp, then put outside in a heavy rain, and where they became waterlogged. They had plastic wrapped around their pots and could not drain. They were left like this for a couple of days. I returned today and the poor things had been thrown out! Discarded!

I then stuck to the manager. I told him that he

blew his chances to gain customers. I explained to him about Violet care and propagation. I told him that he could have sold no I.d. Violet leaf cuttings for a single dollar, and then these people would have to buy soil, a small jar to root their cutting, a pot, soil, vitamins and fertilizer, garden gloves, razor blades, a marking pen, and other soil amendments appropriate to correct the lack of African violet care. All of which the hardware store carries.

I'm so disappointed and distressed. The poor little Violets. RIP

Going for the Blue - Why You Should Consider Growing to Show

By Sandy Skalski

"I don't grow for show, I just want to enjoy my violets." I've heard this phrase many times, and often from people who grow beautiful African violets. Many of these growers also express little interest in clubs because it's 'all about shows.' If this describes you, please read on. I want to give you a different perspective.

People give a lot of reasons for why they don't join a club, or if they do, why they don't participate in shows. A few people claim that it takes too much time, but that doesn't have to be the case. You could focus on a few plants; you don't need to show dozens. Some growers insist they can't compete with top growers in their clubs. I have good news here. The grower you are really competing with is YOU! You can only grow the best plants you can. You can't control how well other people grow their plants. So, in a way, this is about YOUR personal best.

Here are the top six reasons I think you should consider growing to show.

- 1. You will become a better grower.** Not only will you grow better violets, you will grow better everything, including better outdoor gardens. When I started getting serious with my violet growing, I saw how the lessons I learned could be applied to my flower and vegetable gardens. Violets get suckers that need to be removed, but trees and bushes do as well. Just as with violets, suckers distort the plant and sap energy away and should be removed. Likewise, regular grooming, watering and fertilizing make for a more beautiful garden. Good habits bring dividends.
- 2. You will continue to learn every year.** There will always be a new challenge. Perhaps a beautiful new variety requires different conditions to get into top form. Maybe you will try miniatures or trailers for the first time. African

violet species aren't as flashy as their cultivar cousins, but they make beautiful specimens and do well in natural light. Some years, I made mistakes and my plants disappointed me. Other years, I tried a new technique that really paid off. Either way, I learned something to make me a better grower.

- 3. You will enjoy the extra time with your plants.** A different level of attention is needed to grow a good show plant. Think of it as 'quality time'. More frequent potting and consistent care will get your entire collection looking so good, you will look forward to those extra hours.
- 4. You will be delighted by how beautiful your plants look, and you will be happy to show them off.** How many times have you looked at a gorgeous plant on your shelf and wished you could show it off? You will also be able to time a lovely blooming plant for a special occasion or as a gift.
- 5. You will make friends.** Internet groups are great, but nothing takes the place of face to face friendships. You will share your plants and growing challenges, but you will also share laughs and the simple joy of friendship.
- 6. You will be proud of your results.** Friends and family will stop by to admire the show and you will be pleased that you were a part of it. The public will be there as well, and you will enjoy seeing their reaction to the beautiful results you obtained. Plus, you are educating the public and perhaps enticing new members to join your club.

Have I tempted you to try a few show plants? Here's how to get started. First, choose a few nice plants, preferably varieties that make good show plants. Check "Tally Time," the "Best Varieties List" or look at the "And the Winner's Are" column in the *African Violet Magazine*. Ask experienced

growers in your local clubs for suggestions. True novice growers may want to limit the number of potential show plants to five to ten for this exercise. Place these plants under the best growing conditions. Consistent care will yield the best results. Don't let these plants dry out and be sure they are growing in fresh potting mix. You'll want to repot the plants at least twice a year, perhaps more frequently for fast-growing, large standards. Don't be afraid to groom your plants and remove leaves. Regular and consistent grooming results in larger, more symmetrical plants.

Get a copy of *Growing To Show*, now published by AVSA. It is invaluable for all growers. When my first copy wore out, I bought a second. You will find advice for timing the bloom on your show plants. For best results, ask for advice from someone with conditions similar to your own. I grow primarily in my basement. If I followed the advice of warm

weather growers for timing bloom, I would have a difficult time getting plants to a show.

I also have a message for experienced growers: *Give away all your best growing tips to the new growers.* The faster they get over the rookie mistakes, the better their plants will grow and nicer plants means prettier shows. Your regional shows will be better, too. Yes, I am asking you to train up your future competition. New, interested people are what keep our hobby alive. How many times have you seen new growers become discouraged and give up the hobby? I am always delighted when somebody wins the 'Best Novice' ribbon at our club show. That first Blue Ribbon brings a lot of joy and hopefully a lot of encouragement to keep showing and keep learning. It also means that I had better stay on my toes and continue trying to grow my own personal best.

Now go win Blue Ribbons!



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

LE-Prekrasnaia Kreolka

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan

Hybridized by: E. Lebetskaia

Semiminiature



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Sister Sylvia

Exhibited by: Kenneth Rein

Hybridized by: F. Wagman

Semiminiature

Painted Silk

Exhibited by:
Mary Corondan
Hybridized by:
J. Stokes
Semiminiature



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Contest Entry

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN... ...you have too many African Violets?

By Claire Ulanoff

Yes, I know, some of us think "there's no such thing as too many!"

But do you know you have too many when:

You find plants at the back of your shelves you'd forgotten you had?

You find plants at the back of your shelves that long ago went to that great compost heap in the sky – and you didn't notice?

You find those dead plants and realize that you hadn't watered them in a month? No wonder!

You put down leaves when you're in a hurry and don't label them because you think "I'll remember" – and then you wind up with a tray of rooted NoIDs because you have no idea who they are?

All those rooted leaves that "didn't count" as plants have now produced 50 babies?

Your planting supplies have taken over an entire closet/utility room/porch/guest bath?

You're obsessed with scanning online vendor

catalogs, just to "see" what's new?

You place an order for a dozen plants from one of those online vendors and then realize when the plants arrive that you already had them?

You seriously start looking at converting your bedroom into the plant room because you can always sleep on the couch?

Your husband/wife/significant other/partner/friends start speaking to you slowly, in calm voices, just suggesting that maybe this has gone too far?

Your husband/wife/significant other/partner/friends start yelling at you, suggesting that maybe an intervention might be necessary?

The plants take it into their own hands...well, leaves...and develop some deadly and contagious plant disease that wipes them all out?

Oh wait...that would mean you could get more plants!

When a Teacher Became a Student, Too - Part One

By Jennie Lawrence

It all started with a generous donation of standard African violet seeds from Ronn Nadeau. I had never raised African violets from seed. Only a few of my current students realized most of the plants in the lab area were that type. A learning experience was in store for all.

The first lesson consisted of an inventory of the package when it arrived. Critical thinking questions were put into play. "Why do we need to inventory the package?" students thought, and came up with various answers. "So we can make sure nothing is damaged." "We need to make sure everything that is supposed to be there is there."

The next step involved reading the directions carefully. This is standard procedure in my classroom for any experiment. It teaches the students to make sure they have everything they need before they begin. After they have read through the directions once, there are no last minute surprises. They are familiar with the procedure, and have their materials at hand.

Because this is a mixed grade, high school Science class, I require all non-metric measurements be converted to that system. Students checked a reference table, and found that one fluid ounce equals 29.57 milliliters. The instructions called for three fluid ounces of tap water. They figured out that three fluid ounces were equal to 88.71 milliliters. The graduated cylinders in the science lab are not that precise. We reviewed the rules of rounding. Because it was greater than five, the students rounded up to 89 ml.

We did not have 3.5-inch square pots. We had to substitute 3.75-inch round pots. Again, we converted inches to centimeters; using the formula that one-inch equals 2.54 centimeters. Students calculated the pots were 9.525 cm in diameter.

The next step involved calculating actual germination. Prior to the arrival of the African

violet seeds, I had students do a simple experiment that involved germinating Great Northern bean seeds in plastic bags. This allowed them to see the actual growth of the seed, the changes that took place, and the growth and development of the plant. They had to calculate the germination rate. Students started sixteen seeds. Of those, eleven actually grew. They divided 11 by 16, and found they had a 68.75 percent germination rate.

After the seeds arrived, the young scientists did some research, and found the violets should have a twenty-five to thirty-five percent germination rate. This led to the next question. How does the company determine how many seeds go into in a packet? We brainstormed ideas. Counting the seeds was one suggestion. Again, critical thinking came into play.

The students thought they could count the seeds by looking at the packets using the stereoscopes. (A type of microscope used for viewing larger items – minerals, plant parts, etc.) After all, they reasoned, the seeds were visible in the glassine envelopes. Unfortunately, the fibers in the glassine were highly visible, while the seeds were not.

While that method did not work, they felt somewhat successful when they used magnifying glasses. (The seeds were still in the glassine envelopes at this point.) The count per packet ranged from 150 seeds to 200 seeds. The teens thought the differences might have been because some seeds were stuck together, or some were counted twice.

The next method for determining seed count was a bit more complicated. The students decided to weigh the glassine envelope with the seeds in it, then remove a preset number of seeds, weigh them, then weigh all the seeds, weigh the empty envelope, and calculate the number of seeds from

all that data. (Note: Weight is being expressed as grams. While the word weight is not technically correct, it is commonly used.)

Every glassine packet with seeds weighed exactly 0.5 grams. Students hypothesized that each packet would have the same number of seeds. Then they ran into a problem. Our scales could not recognize ten violet seeds, or twenty, or thirty.

One brave young man finally volunteered to actually count the seeds in one packet. He admits that it became a daunting task within a few minutes. The seeds went flying off if he tried to manipulate them with tweezers. He found he had to be very careful even breathing. He persevered however, and finally concluded that there were 200 seeds in the packet. The students decided they could work with that figure when it came time to calculate germination rates.

The members of the horticulture class were finally ready to plant the seeds. They carefully followed the directions provided on a nice postcard included with the order. The seeds were in their pots, and the pots were placed in gallon zip-lock bags. Each team leader's name was written on the bag. The plants were placed next to the growing trays that are under florescent light.

There was only one problem. It was cold in the classroom. The following day, students found the temperature was 68 degrees F. This was not optimal for germination. I was afraid the seeds would

rot. After some discussion, we decided to put the pots on a heating pad specially designed for plants. We carefully monitored the temperature at the surface of the potting mix for the next few days. It was steady at 26.2 degrees C, or 79.16 degrees F. (In hindsight, I wish one group had kept their pot at room temperature. This would have been an interesting comparison.)

The directions said that the seeds would start germinating at around fifteen days after sowing, and would continue to germinate for a few weeks beyond. The teens consulted a calendar, and determined the seeds should start germinating around October 14. Students marveled that something so tiny was going to turn into a plant, just as the bean seeds had. One asked, "Everything it needs to turn into a plant is in that little speck of a seed?"

Through the whole process, each individual was required to keep a set of working notes. These are nothing formal; rather dated entries that are jotted down as we go. Later, they will be required to write a formal paper about the process.

The students are very excited about this project. They rush in every day, eager to check their pots. Truthfully, I am as excited as they are. The seed pots are one of the first things I check on when I enter my classroom in the morning. But for now, it is time to wait and see what is going to happen.

Tomorrow's Pink Ice

Exhibited by: Susan Arnao

Hybridized by: Jeff Smith

Standard



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

When will I Learn? Maybe this time?

By Barbara Werness

WARNING: Some pictures you are about to see contain graphic content and may be upsetting to some people. Viewer discretion is advised.

Like most every plant grower, I have had my misadventures with African violets. Let's see, sever neglect after my daughter's accident, a few small bouts with mealybugs, aphids, thrips, scale, watering with softened water; and the really fun one, root knot nematodes. As much of a pain those all were, they were fairly easy to diagnose and treat. (Well, in the case of root knot nematodes the treatment is a fond sayonara as they entered the compost bin.)

Over the past few years something was been plaguing my African violets and gesneriads and really had me stumped. How many times have you heard someone say "take a plant to the university for a diagnosis"? But not me; that's a waste of money; I can handle this; I'll figure it out. (Remember those words.)

Sometime in the recent few years, my plants started to look extraordinarily stressed. Starting with the more mature leaves, they began to dry up. I said *dry up*; no mush, no rot. And it happened fast, like within a few days.



Plant water is run through reverse osmosis, so that is not the problem. A ceiling fan is constantly running the room, but two additional fans were added for circulation with no positive results. At this point I decided it was botrytis. All the dead and

damaged leaves were removed and the plants sprayed with a fungicide. The spray yellowed the existing leaves, but again there were no positive results.



Ultimately, my whole 150+ collection of show plants and trays of starter and sales plants looked like this....

Now it's down to just the trunk of the plant. However, I caught on that the plants could be saved by removing all the



leaves and cutting or snipping off the center of the plant. The plants were watered as usual (no dome) and as you can see, they sent up suckers. Not all of them made it, but enough



hybrids.

did to be very encouraging. After harvesting the suckers, the root ball was just tossed. Many of my show plants were saved; but way too many had been lost, including my own



The suckers grew into beautiful show plants. I was a happy camper and entering shows again. BANG!! It all started again. Within a few months there were the dried up leaves. Talk about Heartbroken! And even though I said, "That's it. I'm done. To *^#!+*# with African violets", I started over.

So, now it is AVSA convention time. I was talking with one of the vendors who seemed to have had the same problem. He had taken plants to the university for diagnosis and the conclusion is Rhizoctonia, a root fungus. It was a tidy little sum to purchase the recommended fungicide, Cleary's 3336, but so be it. In a conversation with a technician at the parent company, he stressed taking plants to the university for diagnosis. If it was Pythium instead of Rhizoctonia, the Cleary's 3336 would not touch it. Cleary's is a good product for the right thing. But again, I knew better.

Another couple of months have gone by and the plants are on their second drenching. Things do not look very encouraging. I stormed downstairs and said to my hubby, "What the heck am I doing? I've wasted all this time and money and don't really know what the heck the plants have." (Believe me, I was so mad at myself, that a number of expletives were added.)

After running off the form, boxing up a couple plants and writing a check, we headed to the UofM. There was a choice: \$39 for just a diagnosis or an additional \$14 to include a culture. Since root fungus was already pretty much determined, I requested the culture because the exact type of fungus needed to be determined. In a few days the UofM called with the news – PYTHIUM. They did have to run the culture for an exact confirmation. Great! Remember, Cleary's 3336 does not treat Pythium. The plants had lots of roots; the only

problem was that they were brown and dried up. There were no new growth nice fresh white roots.

Here is a sample of what the roots looked like. You can tell by the size of the trunk circled in black, there should be a



good root ball. There is not. All those roots are brown and dried except for two by the white arrows which were fighting for life. (They were ultimately buried in the compost pile.)

Both the university and the technician recommended products for this problem. Subdue MAXX seemed to be the most accessible. I'm not going to mention the cost and time searching for a distributor that had quart bottles but did find one. All plants, both African violets and other gesneriads, have been drenched two times. The new growth, including roots, is strong and healthy. It will still be awhile before having nice show quality plants again, but it's definitely headed in the right direction. It will probably take a couple of years before feeling really comfortable about recurrence; so until then, drenching will be an annual event.

So why did the Pythium invade my collection? Infestation of fungus gnats? Unsterilized potting medium? Unsterilized plant tools? Unwashed hands after touching outdoor plants? Using my fingernails to snip leaves after doing the same with an infected plant? From whom did I get the infected plant? Obviously these are rhetorical questions. It's being careful and watchful in the future that counts.

BOTTOM LINE. DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE. ACT IMMEDIATELY IF YOU SEE A PROBLEM. If your plants don't respond to treatment in a very few weeks, GET THEM DIAGNOSED. Don't lose your collection because you think you know it all. KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE BEFORE WASTING TIME AND MONEY TREATING THE WRONG THING.



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Funambule

Grower and Photographer: Neil Lipson

Hybridized by: N. Robitaille/D. Croteau

Standard

African Violet Pests, Diseases, and Cultural Problems

By Ben Haning

Avoiding pests and diseases:

Purchase plants from reputable sellers. Quarantine new purchases for a while to watch for signs of diseases or pests. Remove buds and blossoms before bringing plants back from a show.

Spider mites: Mites attack the center of the crown. Affected leaves will be small, distorted and will turn gray like ashes. Discard affected plants or spray with Avid (abamectin 2%) at 0.625cc per quart of water once a week for three weeks.

Thrips: Thrips are sucking insects that can damage leaves and blossoms. Thrips often eat pollen from the blossoms and will cause spilled pollen on blossoms. They can be seen with the naked eye as tiny, tan insects crawling on blossoms. To eliminate or suppress thrips remove all blossoms and buds before spraying for thrips. Spray all leaf surfaces every seven days with Avid and Conserve (spinosad 11.6%) at 0.625cc of each per quart of water. Azamax (azadirachtin 1.2%) at 12ml per quart of water is also helpful to eliminate thrips.

Azamax is an antifeedant that keeps thrips larvae from feeding. Overture 35WP is also used for thrips.

Soil Mealybugs: These are small, white fuzzy, sucking insects that attack the roots of African violets. They can be seen on roots and under pots if grown on capillary matting. They also leave white "webs" on the inside of pots. Mealybugs will stunt the growth of plants and if in large numbers they can be seen growing at the intersection of the soil and base of the plant.

Treatment and prevention is accomplished by treatment with Marathon granules (imidacloprid 1%) at a rate of 1 TSP per two to three inch pot and 1 TSP per four inch pot. Marathon should be reapplied to soil media every two to three months. Sprinkle the granules on the soil surface, and water into the potting media.

Botrytis Blight: Botrytis Blight shows up as gray fuzzy fungal growths on surfaces of blossoms and bugs. Blossoms may also turn mushy and gray. High humidity and cool temperatures favor infection with the fungus. Treat with fungicide control.

Powdery Mildew: This fungus appears as a white dusting on leaves and blossoms. It is more common when humidity is high and the days are warm and the nights are cold. Treatment and prevention is accomplished with Spectracide Immunox Multipurpose Fungicide (1.55% Myclobutanil) at a rate of 7.5cc per quart of water. One treatment lasts four to six months.

Crown Rot: This fungal disease causes stunted growth and eventually wilting of the plant. It seems to happen often when the plant's potting mix becomes too dry and then too wet. Crown Rot can be treated by cutting off the crown, removing all the diseased tissue, and spraying with fungicide. Repot the salvaged crown, and keep it bagged until it grows new roots.

Petiole Rot: This is not a disease, but rather a cultural problem. When fertilizer salts accumulate on the rim of the pot, it will cause the petiole of the African violet leaf to rot where it touches the accumulation of fertilizer salts. Frequent repotting with fresh potting mix every three to six months will prevent fertilizer accumulation. Another preventative treatment is to periodically leach the potting mix with water.

Orange crust: This is also a cultural problem rather than a disease. Orange crusts will accumulate on the plant's leaves. Damage to the youngest leaves will cause them to be stunted and distorted. It can be prevented by using less fertilizer, avoiding mat watering on young plants, and by frequent leaching of plants to wash away build up of fertilizer salts.



TIME TO APPLY FOR THE AVSA COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP

For over fifteen years, The African Violet Society of America (AVSA) has offered a college scholarship program for students - undergraduate and graduate - who are studying ornamental horticulture, floriculture, plant genetics, botany, or an equivalent program in an accredited college or university. The award is funded through The AVSA Boyce Edens Research Fund. Dependent upon fund availability at award time, one or possibly two students are selected annually. The award is generally offered for one academic year - two long semesters - at a time. Awardees may apply in successive years but will be in competition with new applicants.

Prior to application, students must have completed a minimum of twenty-four semester or quarter hour credits, while maintaining at least a "B" average. Awards are based upon "merit."

The application form is available on line at www.avsa.org or from student request through the AVSA office. The completed form shall be submitted via standard mail, along with an

official transcript and two professor recommendations, to the Scholarship Selection Committee by March 1, 2017 for the 2017-2018 academic school year.

AVSA remains dedicated to the recognition and advancement of horticultural and related study at the college level.

Here are a few quotes from 2015-16's recipient:
"I'm writing to you once again to thank you for the Boyce Edens College scholarship from the African Violet Society of America...My research will be published in the University of Florida's Journal of Undergraduate research....I'm currently preparing for graduate school...hoping to attain my Master's degree in plant pathology...It means so much to me that the Society believes in me."

Send application to

Charles Ramser
2413 Martin St.

Wichita Falls, TX 76308

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

Return by March 1, 2017 Application Date _____ Expected Graduation Date _____

Name _____
Last First Middle Social Security Number

Address while student _____ Phone _____

Permanent Address (if different) _____

Desired Degree _____ Major _____ Minor _____

Total semester/quarter hours completed at current school as of December, 2016 _____ GPA _____

Total semester/quarter hours completed at all colleges attended as of December, 2016 _____

PLEASE ENCLOSE ONE COPY OF YOUR OFFICIAL COLLEGE TRANSCRIPT WITH THIS APPLICATION.

Cumulative GPA as of December 31, 2016 _____ (Indicate if different from 4 point system)

Other schools attended:

High School _____ Date graduated _____ GPA _____

Colleges _____ GPA _____

_____ If applicable: Date graduated _____ GPA _____

COMPLETE OTHER SIDE

List Awards and Honors you have received in college: _____

List Organizations to which you belong and offices you hold (held):

This scholarship request applies for: (Fill in blanks with the number of hours you plan to take)

Fall 2017: _____ hrs. Spring 2018: _____ hrs.

Did you have scholarship funding during the past year? _____ If yes, name the scholarships and show amount: _____

In this space, in a succinct paragraph, describe your CAREER PLANS, as you foresee them:

Describe briefly your employment history, whether related to horticulture or not:

Describe why this merit scholarship from AVSA would be uniquely meaningful to you.

Faculty to serve as	NAME	POSITION	ADDRESS	PHONE
References:				
(Select 2)				

Send completed application to: **Dr. Charles Ramser**
2413 Martin Street
Wichita Falls, TX 76308
Ph. 940-397-4362

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“And the winners are ...” 434 Plumwood Way • McKinny, TX 75069

By Mary Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY OF WESTERN NEW YORK, NY – Winners: Best in Show/Best Trailer: Reka Muskova; Best Miniature: Jolly Gala; Best Species: *Saintpaulia confusa*, **Paul Kroll**. Best Design, **Laura Buckner**.

OHIO STATE AVS, OH – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Storm Watch, Cajun's Coujon, Buckeye Tea Party; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Dean's Cupid, Jolly Frills, Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Combustible Pigeon, **Debbie McInnis**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Windy Day, Buckeye Nostalgia, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Best Trailer: Beauteous, **Mary Martin**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Gala, Mac's Kismet's Knight, Jolly Cupid, **Cathy Willis**. Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 5c1 clone *tongwensis*, *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 3 clone *shumensis* Mather EE; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 3 clone *shumensis* Mather EE, **Beverley Williams**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Buckeye Seductress, **Kurt Jablonski**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Black Magic Woman', **Terri Vincenzi**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Paul Kroll**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Penny Wichman**.

SAN FRANCISCO AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara EverBeautiful, Tomahawk, Optimara Hiroshige; Best Standard: Optimara EverBeautiful, **Madeline Taube**. Best in



Show/Best Semiminiature: Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus* 'Big Apple', **Cy Yee**. Best Miniature: Everdina; Best Trailer: Sport of Pixie Runaround; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Vera Carlson**. Design Sweepstakes, **Cez Acru**.

WISCONSIN COUNCIL OF AV CLUBS, WI – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rainbow's Limelight, Rebel's Rose Bud, Buckeye Seductress, **Arlene Garvens**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Ma's Wicked Witch, Cajun's Fair Maiden; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cajun's Lil Sprinkles, Sierra Sunrise, Jersey Blue Ice; Best Trailer: Deer Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina dryas* 'Hisako'; Best Species: *Saintpaulia* 5b clone Silvert; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Morgan's Declan Duff, Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Best Species Collection: *Saintpaulia* 8 clone *rupicola*, *Saintpaulia* 5b clone *grotei* Silvert, *Saintpaulia* 5c2 clone *diplotricha* Uppsala 3085; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, **Marty Anderson**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Rhapsodie Clementine, **Bonnie Henell**. Best Semiminiature: Jolly Sunday, **Ruth Mengsol**. Design Sweepstakes (tie): **Doug Kindschuh and Ruth Mengsol**.

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Please print legibly. List the full name of each variety and exhibitor, omitting abbreviations. Only the information listed on this form will be included in the AVSA Magazine column.

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1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

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1. _____

1. _____

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3. _____

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Exhibitor: _____

Exhibitor: _____

Best Species Collection

2nd Best Species Collection

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

Exhibitor: _____

Exhibitor: _____

CONTINUED ON BACK

Best in Show: _____

Best Miniature: _____

Exhibitor: _____

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Exhibitor: _____

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Please do not abbreviate. Write out Sinningia, Streptocarpus, Episcia, etc.

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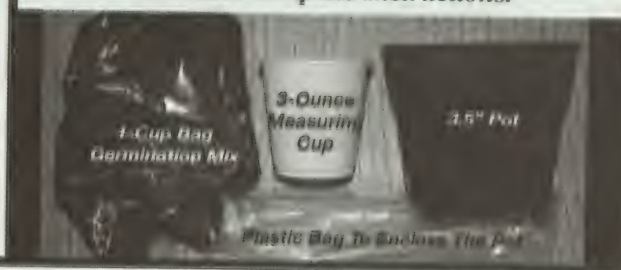
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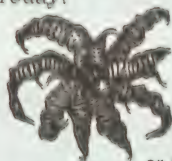
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African Violet

MAGAZINE

March • April 2017

Volume 70

Number 2



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African Violet

March • April

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On this Cover:

Rob's Chilly Willy

Exhibited by: Anne Nicholas

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Miniature

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Hello everyone!

Depending on where you live, Spring may have already occurred, or will soon be arriving. I had the privilege of spending a few days at the Atlanta Botanical Gardens in mid-February, and was thoroughly rewarded with cherry and magnolia trees in full bloom and the camellias were outstanding. There was even a camellia and an orchid show going on at the same time, which were just spectacular. It is always an appreciated experience to see ANYTHING green in February, as I returned to frozen tundra and snowbanks, which will not begin to thaw until mid to late May.



Spring is when many clubs are focused on their local shows and it's also a time to remember to sign up for the AVSA Convention and Show being planned in Orlando, FL. Do not wait until after the early bird rate has passed by to register. Do it now, so it's all organized, and then you won't have to panic about it later on.

A common theme among all organizations, clubs, and special interest groups, is the topic of dwindling membership. What are we doing to attract the interest and involvement of new members? It's not so long ago, that I was the youngest member of my local club. I remember having to get a ride home after the meeting was over, as I wasn't old enough to have a driver's license. I didn't have a cell phone, hand-held video games were not yet invented, and the television only had three channels. Our latest invention was the microwave oven, which my mother was convinced was an instrument of the devil. I know what you're thinking, but many people can remember times much before these and other modern conveniences existed. Today, we are bombarded with so many options, which compete for our attention. Some people can work from their homes if their job allows it. We form friendships and communicate with people through the Internet and various social media options. We can shop for clothes, food, and almost anything online, and have it delivered to our door. We almost never have to interact with people if we choose not to.

It is not surprising today that people are not looking to get involved in a social group, which meets to share experiences of growing African violets, especially when there are so many other alternatives that engage their time with little or no effort on their part.

If we want to encourage new members to join, we are

going to have to engage them with other things that provides more interest than other things to which they have already committed their time. How do we do that? It takes time and involvement with people.

One way in which I have had some experience, is to contact your local school board and find out about any Home School networks that operate in your area. Quite often, because of the nature of home-schooled children, there is the need to get involved in community activities and science projects. Be willing to work with a curriculum and offer to provide the plants and materials, which could be sponsored by your local club. Encourage youth categories at your shows, in the special exhibits division, or elsewhere in your schedule. Become a mentor to someone and regularly invest your time with them. Invite them to your meetings.

Our youth and future members interact differently in social settings and this is a valuable investment in providing a setting in which they can bring their new ideas and concepts to the table. Don't be overly concerned if something sounds like an extreme idea. Remember when covering the pots of show plants with tin foil, was just the way it was? Remember how relieved we all were when we didn't have to do that anymore? New ideas and questions about WHY we do things is a good thing to either explain the reasons or come up with new ideas.

Remember, we were once the new member filled with questions and amazement. I still get excited when the first blossom opens from a new variety that I've just acquired. Try to think about how you were first introduced to African violets and their Gesneriad cousins. Try to share that experience with a class of students and help encourage them by sharing your plants and knowledge with them. We've become so focused on providing information to the virtual consumer, that we have provided them with everything they need online and they aren't interested in belonging to a physical group.

I believe we have to strive for a balance between virtual reality and physical reality, as we are social people, who seek human interaction. Let's give it a shot and see if we can become an African violet mentor to a new and future member.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Winston J. Goretsky'.

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

On page 20 in this issue of the AVM you will find the beginning of four pages of Coming Events, most notices of local Shows and Sales, all over the United States and some in Canada.

A few of the event notices that I receive always arrive past the deadline, leaving me to contact a club member, telling them that I cannot get their club's notice in the current issue. I know that the club Shows and Sales are not just important to their club members, but also to African violet growers in their local, or regional areas.

All I can do is suggest that they go to the AVSA website, and see if they can get their notice on the Events Page. Please encourage your club members in charge of Publicity, to send their notices in as soon as the date and location is decided upon.

There is a lot of positive buzz about the upcoming AVSA Convention in Orlando, FL. Our Convention Director, **Kathy Lahti**, and her Committee, always do a fantastic job of hotel selection, and this one in Orlando looks like a perfect fit for AVSA Members.

Thanks to Pat Hancock's great Article Contest, I've spent very little time hunting for articles. I know that our members have enjoyed reading the Contest entries, as have I. If you don't consider yourself a writer, please let me know a topic you would like to see covered in this publication. We have several writers who may be interested in



researching your topic, or may already have the experience to share.

In this issue we have two very informative articles written by award-winning grower, **Sandra Skalski**. *Quarentine! Why and How You Should Isolate New Plants and Leaves* (pg 43) and *How to Eliminate Thrips – Part 1* (pg 54).

Susan Anderson's *Tally Time* report is on pages 28 & 29. The Report "is a summary of the African violet varieties receiving the greatest number of awards in AVSA Standard Shows during the past year."

I have had several African violets growing in my office through the years, and hate to admit that I have too many plants in here now.

There are fourteen African violets, six "other" Gesneriads, and the much older houseplants that survived Hurricanes Rita and Ike, with no attention for weeks; two Ficus trees and a large, climbing Ivy.

As I am a dedicated outdoor gardener, I don't have many houseplants at home; except for a 50+ year old Schefflera (gift from my mother-in-law 35 years ago when she moved), a couple of Jade plants, and a Fiddle Leaf Fig that totally fills one corner of my home office, up to the ceiling.

See you in Orlando!

Ruth



Office Update

By Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

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AVSA's 71st Consecutive Convention and Show will be held May 28 – June 4, 2017, at the Wyndham Orlando Resort, International Drive, in Orlando, Florida. Our host is the African Violet Council of Florida. There are going to be great tours and presentations. I hope you can get signed up for all!

The Convention Registration and Information is posted on the AVSA website at <http://avsa.org/conventions-2017>. If you are unable to print it out from the website, please give me a call at the office (409) 839-4725, and I will be more than happy to mail you the information. **Please get your convention registration to the office as soon as possible.** For those of you wanting to sit



together at any of the three main meals, your registrations must come in the same envelope. **No seating assignments will be accepted after the early cut off date.** I greatly appreciate your help with this!

Thank you to everyone that has generously donated to this year's show awards. If you would like to donate, please print off the online form and mail it to the office, or enter it on your convention registration form.

I hope to see you all in Orlando! Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions!

Amy



The African Violet Society of America Handbook For Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges



An updated version (May 2016) of the **AVSA Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors & Judges** is now available to purchase in print and in PDF format. You can visit the AVSA website store <http://www.avsa.org/store-books> or simply scan the QR code.



*The African Violet Society America, Inc.
2016*

A Family Portrait: *Columnea* 'Melissa'

By Paul Kroll
East Aurora, New York

The genus *Columnea* is a fascinating one with many species and hybrids. I have grown many of them over the years, with varying results. *Columnea* are epiphytic plants that grow in the crotches of trees, on their limbs, etc. They like their roots to dry out between waterings. I dare say that more *Columnea* have been killed with kindness of overwatering than any other cause.

While they grow well in natural light in many areas, they do need a lot of light to grow and bloom. I have grown them quite outdoors in the summertime, hanging from the eaves on the east side of our house where they get morning sun. Whatever is grown outside in the summer is "fed" to Jack Frost. I choose not to bring in plants that have summered outside. I now grow my *Columnea* plants under four T-8 tubes and they do well.

I saucer-water most of my plants, and I do not wick-water anything. The *Columnea* plants have no saucers under their pots. I water them and the water drains out into the trays below where the pots are suspended. In this way, I can keep from overwatering them.

Columnea is a "vining" type of gesneriad. Some grow in an upright growth pattern, and some will trail when stems get long enough to do so. I prefer to start cuttings in a shallow pan pot. When they

are well-rooted, pinch the tops off and the cuttings will branch. Do that as many times as needed to make a full pot and a healthy-looking plant.

Columnea and *Aeschynanthus* need cooler temperatures to set buds. They do like it warm and humid, though. *Columnea* 'Melissa' grows for me on the top shelf of a plant stand under 4 T-8 tubes and my plant room is quite warm and humid most of the year.

The fertilizers are rotated weekly and everything gets watered with the same water and fertilizer that week.



Blooms can be quite abundant at times, and other times a bit sparse. I like to leave the blossoms on as long as possible, as the berries that form (seed pods) are quite colorful and add to the ornamental characteristics of the plant when entered

into a show. *Columnea* 'Melissa' has all green foliage, so would not qualify for ornamental characteristics other than bloom, even with the berries. This is one hybrid that should be in bloom to be exhibited. Those large, orange blooms are prolific and beautiful!

Try one of the *Columnea* hybrids if you have not had luck with the species. In most cases, given the proper conditions, you will be rewarded with a large plant full of bloom!

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

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Marge Farrand – Ann Arbor, MI

'Mag's Cher Amour' (10869) 10/24/2016 (M. Farrand) Single-semi-double chimera white ruffled pansy/large pink patches, light purple stripe, dark purple fantasy. Medium green, pointed, serrated. **Standard**

Kevin Degner – Oshkosh, WI

'Kev's Blue Eyes' (10870) 11/12/2016 (K. Degner) Single white sticktite star/blue eye, variable blue edge. Light green, plain, heart-shaped, quilted. **Standard**

'Kev's Plum Surprise' (10871) 11/12/2016



(K. Degner) Single lavender sticktite pansy/darker top petals, white eye. Medium green, plain, quilted. **Standard**

'Kev's Rosy Starlite' (10872) 11/12/2016 (K. Degner) Single rose fluted star/variable wide fuchsia band, maturing to fuchsia/lighter rays. Dark green, plain, pointed, quilted/red back. **Standard**

REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

'Milk's Ten Cats' (10759) Change from **Semi-miniature** to **Miniature**.



In Memory

Doris Carson passed away January 22, 2017 in Joplin, MO. She was a lifetime member of AVSA and the Gesneriad Society and a Master Judge in both societies. She was a past president of Missouri Valley African Violet Society, Heart of America Gesneriad Society, MKO Dynamite AV Club of Joplin (disbanded) and a past director in the Gesneriad Society. Doris was an avid grower of African violets and the other gesneriads being very generous of any plant she had, always willing to share a start, cutting, rhizome or leaf.

Doris graduated from St. John's School of Nursing in 1961 and later earned her Master's Degree in Nursing from the University of Kansas. She was the family planning director & nurse practitioner for the Economic Security Corp for thirty years, and then RN for the Community Clinic until she retired in June 2016. In her

church, she was an elder, parish nurse, and Sunday School Teacher. She was a past president of the Lions Club, an American Diabetes educator and a Life Member of the NAACP.

She leaves behind her husband of fifteen years, Richard Edwards, a son, two daughters, two granddaughters, and a host of friends that will miss her enthusiasm for life and her infectious sense of humor. She will be greatly missed.

Elaine M. Earley, 81, passed away on October 2, 2016. Born in Portsmouth, VA., she was the daughter of the late Denny and Marjorie Moore. She was preceded in death by her husband, John J. Earley, also a former grower of violets. She retired as a Registered Nurse from Hampton VA Medical Center. Elaine and John were long time members of the Tidewater African Violet Society and loved growing violets. She will be dearly missed.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Episcia 'Thad's Pink Flamingo'

Exhibited by: Jeri Anderson

Hybridized by: T. Skaggs

Lakeshore Silver

*Exhibited by: Leonard Re
Hybridized by: J. Brownlie*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Rob's Dodo Bird

*Exhibited by: Maureen Pratt
Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Semiminiature*

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Mesmerizing Pink

Exhibited by: Penny Smith-Kerker

Hybridized by: L Lyon Greenhouses

Semiminiature



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Streptocarpus 'Blueberry Butterfly'

*Exhibited by: Trudy Brekle
Judges' Special Award*

Growing African Violets Aquaponically

By Bruce Pearson

This past year my violets have significantly improved both in size, and blooms both in quantity and size. Plants are vigorous, with very healthy root systems. Many have much larger leaves than usually experienced. A year or so ago, I had thought my soil was contaminated with a weed killer or some herbicide was entering the picture that I could not detect. This was not the case at all.

Although I have had violets off and on since the 50's, I had more or less treated them similarly to mass merchant conditions. They were certainly 2nd class citizens when compared to my orchids. Giving them just a little extra attention has given rise to some dramatically changed plants.

My first step forward was growing the plants with wicks. I had always thought this was against all laws of Nature, but will leave that for another article. Anyway, taking advice from others, I started out with 1/4 tsp of fertilizer per gallon (20-20-20) in each deli cup. I am all but positive now, this was the culprit in the deformed plant growth and the weird anomalies that were occurring. I am still not sure why the plants did not exhibit tip burn, usually associated with high soluble salt levels. But once I reduced the fertilizer to 1/8 tsp per gallon, my troubles began to disappear.

I repotted many that had lost their root system, because the soil was staying too wet. A repotting certainly helps, I have learned, but there is no way I am going to be able to repot every three months as recommended. My stock plants are lucky to be transplanted once a year.

In early 2015, I was given seven 1,700-gallon fiberglass fish ponds. And yes, you guessed it, I am an avid frustrated tropical fish, waterlily, and aquatic plant hobbyist, too. Designing a water garden off to the side of our pool, we buried these fully plumbed, and added a multitude of smaller size tubs. This is still a work in progress, mainly adding

a few smaller tubs and stepping stones to form an extension of the deck.

Living in South Florida, I added some Mollies, Platys, Swordtails, and Guppies to the tubs. This is absolutely necessary to eliminate our continuous mosquito problem. In less than a year we are almost overrun by the progeny. Literally thousands of fish thrive in the tubs.

Waterlilies were our main objective, and these too, do extremely well, particularly in the summer. I try to feed the fish everyday but this is by no means set in stone. They can sometimes go several weeks without feed if we are traveling. Many aquarium owners are adamant about having someone come over and feed their fish daily. This is not me. In fact, I find it detrimental, as they are usually overfed and the water becomes putrid before the owner returns. No one feeds the lakes, ponds, rivers, and oceans and the fish live. They also do not have artificial aeration or filtration. So continuing on with the article...

The tubs, as I will refer to them, receive natural rainfall and they are supplemented with raw well water. Our well water here in Loxahatchee Groves, (Rural western West Palm Beach) tests as some of the worst in Palm Beach County, unlike our well water in Boynton Beach, which is some of the best. Soluble salts are not extremely high, but we're loaded with Iron, Sulphur, and a multitude of other contaminants. But the fish and aquatic plants thrive. If we could use pure rainwater, it would be better, but that is not the case.

I draw the water from the closest tub and fill a fifteen-gallon vessel that I use to water my violets. I am sure this is loaded with fish waste and beneficial trace elements not found in "over the counter" products. To this, I add just short of two tsp. of fertilizer. I fill my deli cups with this. The plants seemed to have exploded this past year, and I can attribute it to nothing else.

So how can you adapt this to your situation? Simplest would be to get a reservoir and collect rainwater. Into this reservoir add a few fish appropriate to your area. Goldfish, Koi, Bait minnows would work fine up north. We are blessed with a climate that will support tropical fish. Feed the fish a varied diet, and don't worry about doing it daily or even weekly. I would suggest at least three different brands of fish food. I use an expensive flake food sparingly and a cheap pond food from Tractor Supply™ as a general diet. Also give them scraps, such as shrimp shells and heads...but sparingly.

Another method, and perhaps better, is to simply place a small fish in each of your deli cups, especially if you have a manageable size collection. This would directly benefit the plant from the bacteria and other organisms generated and carried by the fish. Ok, so you question, how will the fish react to the fertilized water? I see no reaction. In fact the slightly higher salt content is probably beneficial to the fish itself. Feeding the fish occasionally would benefit the fish as well as the plant.

You need to start with as small a fish as you can get, as a large one will have a negative effect on the biological balance. Feeder fish from a pet store would be fine, a guppy or baby platy even better. As an extravagant fish, a Betta known commonly as a Siamese Fighting Fish would do well in a quart vessel, provided room temperature seldom falls much below seventy-two degrees. These fish actually go to the surface to take in oxygen.

Before I get any flack from people claiming that is not enough room for a betta, I have actually

seen this fish in the wild surviving in a drying-up rice paddy. They are raised by the hundreds of thousands in 1/2 pint whiskey bottles. They can tolerate stagnant conditions, and do not do well in actively aerated water. They are tropical. (I bet these same people that feel sorry for the fish have veal in their diet...another story that I will leave well enough alone.)

If your home is on the cooler side in the winter, swordtails will do the best. They are native near our farm in Mexico and water temperatures there can dip down into the 50's, on occasion lower. I think Platys are also not so tropical.

As your plant settles in, you'll find that roots soon go down the wick and into the water. You will see the fish feeding on these roots. The fish will quickly eliminate insects that enter the reservoir for hydration, another invisible benefit.

Imagine symbiosis and the "circle of life" being played out on your own windowsill or light stand.



Fish ponds provide water for the violets.



Fish Ponds.



*Deli cup with fertilized water and a Betta Siamese Fighting Fish.
(Note: the healthy root system.)*



Red Wag Platy living below a violet in a deli cup. Tolerant to lower temperature, they can go a couple of weeks without additional food. They live outside in the 1,700 gallon tubs and there are probably 1,000 or more in the tank.



Violets on one of the window shelves under natural and LED light.



Prize-winning Betta, photographed in Bangkok, Thailand. It had been offered for \$100!



Rob's Hand Puppet

Exhibited by:

Mary Corondan

Hybridized by:

R. Robinson

Miniature Chimera

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

AVSA's 2016/2017 Article Contest

By Pat Hancock

The results of the **2016/17 Article Contest** will soon be in and the Winners will be announced at the AVSA Convention in Orlando, FL.

I could not be more pleased with the amount of participation in the Contest, and no matter who the winners are, I thank one and all who entered the Contest. I have heard nothing but praise for your efforts.

There were so many deserving articles, that I am sure it will be hard for the Judges to select three. For this reason, Ruth and I are planning to choose three runners-up, that we will be honoring.

The "NEW" news, is that we will be extending the Contest for another year. The Winners of the New **2017/18 Article Contest** will be announced at the AVSA Buffalo, NY, 2018 Convention.

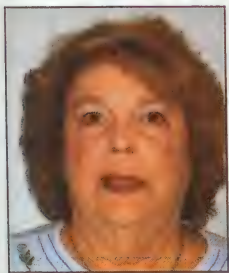
The Rules will be exactly the same as the 2016/17 Contest:

1. ALL entered articles must be Original Work and cannot have been published before.
2. You may write as many articles as you wish, and each entry must be marked, **CONTEST**.
3. **Submissions must be received AFTER March 1, 2017.**

Cutoff date for entries is April 1, 2018. Articles received after this date will NOT be considered.

1. Hybridizers, Commercial Members, and Judges taking part, are not eligible to receive prizes.
2. The decisions of the Judges will be FINAL.
3. Due to the high cost of shipping leaves Internationally, leaves will only be shipped to winners in the US. International members will be required to pick theirs up at the 2018 Buffalo, NY Convention.

Sallie Barlow for AVSA Director



I was born in Hammond, Louisiana, and lived in several states as my father was in the Air Force. My grandmother, mother, and an aunt and uncle, introduced me to African violets early in my life. I graduated

from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1967. I also attended Louisiana State University where I worked on a Masters in Social Work. I retired from the State of Louisiana in 2011.

I did not start growing violets until the late 1960s. I learned to grow violets when I lived in Colorado and had time to read books and the *African Violet Magazine*. I have belonged to three local Baton Rouge AV clubs in Louisiana as well as LACO (Louisiana Judge's and Grower's Council), DIXIE, and AVSA. I learned more about growing violets from my many friends in the clubs that I have belonged to, as well as the workshops I have attended. I served as President, Vice Presi-

dent, Recording and Corresponding Secretary, and Show Chairman. I have belonged to AVSA since the '70s, and have been involved in many different levels in the local clubs including writing the show schedule, entries, staging, judges, and award's Chairpersons. I am currently Judge's Chairman for Sundowner's 2017 Spring Show. I am a Senior Judge and took my last senior test in 2016.

I grow over seventy-five violets and over twenty-five "other gesneriads." Due to the warm weather we have had in Louisiana, I just recently brought my plant stand, containing my "other gesneriads" inside. And "Yes" they are quarantined from the inside plants.

I am honored to be nominated as an AVSA Director.

Sallie Barlow

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WHERE YOU WILL STAY IN ORLANDO!



Your hotel destination for the AVSA 2017 Convention is the beautiful Wyndham Orlando Resort, 8001 International Drive. It is near all of Orlando's famous theme parks, and the hotel has free shuttle service to the nearby parks. The Wyndham offers a courtyard area with colorful gardens and peaceful lagoons. Two heated swimming pools, two whirlpools and a sauna. There is a state-of-the-art fitness facility, and a Lobby Tech Bar with specialty cocktails and lots of outlets for web connection. Don't forget to visit the Ice Cream store.



The Wyndham gladly accepts pets. Guest rooms have beds covered with Bewell bedding and down pillows. There is a 40 inch flat panel TV in each room, and a shower massage so you can relax after a busy day. There are no elevators, so remember to request a first floor room if you have lots of baggage!

You won't have to go far for entertainment, shopping, and dining. Nearby is Mango's Tropical Café, one of Orlando's hottest clubs, featuring a banquet combined with live bands and dance performances. Then there is Restaurant Row for dining and shopping. Enjoy Turkish, Italian, Lebanese, and Japanese cuisine, along with a variety of seafood dishes. Finish off with a creamy cheese and chocolate fondue at the Melting Pot.

Besides being near to Disney's Magic Kingdom, Seaworld Orlando, and Universal Studios, the Wyndham is close to lesser known sites such as The Holy Land Experience that lets you experience the sites, sounds and historical time frames of the Bible.



The Medieval Times Restaurant takes you back to the days of Knighthood. Or you could swim with the Dolphins at Discovery Cove.

AVSA Design
Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



The Rio Grande River
Judith Carter

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

Violets Down Under

When we think of African violets in other countries, Russia comes to mind, as does Canada. We probably do not think too much about the "land down under," Australia. However, they do have a good share of violet fans in that country, too.

African Violets for Everyone with the tag line, "Plants for pure pleasure," is an Australian web site. According to the information presented on the Home page, it is a new, and revised version of an older site.

Organized and developed by Ruth Coulson, the home page has a lovely background photo of an unnamed fantasy violet. The initial impression was that this was a site simply advertising and selling a book. Further exploration revealed the good information that could also be found.

Indeed, there was an order page tab, and it was for the book with the same title as the web page. The ordering information was impressive. It was very clear about total costs, including shipping, and what countries were in each shipping area.

The Care tab was very typical of a 'how to care for violets' page. However, different bits of information were very interesting. In a description of root growth, Coulson said, "Often their native home was nothing more than a small pocket of decayed leaves and grit between rocks..."

Links to various topics were under this tab including one titled, "How not to kill an African violet." It had stories about killing violets, and how to avoid making those mistakes. There was also a Question and Answer section.

Another link talked about growing plants from leaves. All the measurements given were in met-



ric, as would be expected in Australia.

As with most other web sites, there was a Photo Gallery. It featured both African violets and *Sinningias* in alphabetical listings. Dish gardens and *Gesneriad* plants were also featured. Not all the photos were crisp and clear, but they did give a good representation of the variety available in African violets. The photos were accompanied by brief descriptions. 'Retrospect' was described as, "Pink flowers with blue fantasy on a well-behaved plant."

Coulson also has a newsletter available. While it is a free download, you must click on a link within the site to view it.

You can also view the newsletter on Coulson's Facebook page. This was a fun page to look at, too, with good information and posts. Along with Facebook, a viewer can also link to Coulson's Pinterest board, African Violets for Everyone. There are hundreds of "Pins" here, mostly beautiful photos of blooming plants.

The Links tab takes the viewer to a variety of Australian sites, including The African Violet Association of Australia, some smaller, localized clubs, and resources for purchasing plants and supplies. Our own AVSA was also linked, as was the African Violet Society of Canada.

This was definitely a fun website to explore. Coulson's style makes the viewer feel like they are sitting at the kitchen table, enjoying a cup of tea while discussing violets. The page can be found at: www.africanvioletsforeveryone.net

Coulson's Facebook page is:
www.facebook.com/africanvioletsbyRuth/



"And the winners are ..." 434 Plumwood Way • McKinny, TX 75069

By Mary Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AVC OF GREATER KANSAS CITY –

Winners: Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 5c2* clone *diplotricha* Parker, *S. 5b* clone *grotei*, *S. 5f* clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*; Best Trailer: Biscayne Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Dale Cox**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Letnie Sumerki; Best Miniature: Frosted Denim; Best Semiminiature: Mac's Stop Sign, **Laurie Nelson**. Best Gesneriad: *xSmithicodonia* 'Elizabeth', **Stephanie Howitt**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Marian Schaaf**.

AVS OF PHILADELPHIA, PA – Winners: Best in Show/Best Species: *S. 8* clone *rupicola*, **Stephanie Griffith**. Best Standard: Optimara Trinidad; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Susan Hanna**. Best Semiminiature: Rob's Cool Fruit, **Phyllis Haggerty**. Best Miniature: Windsome, **Elizabeth Branson**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Harlequin Blue', **Judith Smith**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Karen Durzuweit**.

CAPITAL CITY AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rebel's Splatter Kake, Ian-Minuet, Nancy Leigh; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Arapahoe, Rob's Blue Socks, Rob's Cotton Ball; Best in Show/Best Standard: Ian-Minuet; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Moscow Lady'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Cindi Nofziger**. Best Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Humpty Doo, Rob's Toorooka, Milky Way Trail; Best Semiminiature: Cajun's Alfie; Rob's Bad Bunny; Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Best Species: *S. clone grotei* Silvert, **Jeani Hatfield**.

CENTRAL ARKANSAS AVS, AR – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rosie Ruffles, Apache Freedom, Blue Dragon; Best Standard: Rosie Ruffles; Best Trailer: Fun Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Eucodonia* 'Adele'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Danny Tidwell**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Picasso, Ness' Candy Pink, Mardi Gras



Madness; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Outer Orbit, Rob's Inner Orbit, Snuggles Little Dreamer; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Outer Orbit, **Glenda Robertson**. Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Renee Wood**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Betty Ferguson**.

LONE STAR AV COUNCIL, TX

– **Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Picasso, Rebel's Rose Bud, The Alps; Best in Show/Best Standard: Carolina Elegant Affair, **Richard Nicholas**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Fair Maiden, Jersey Snowflakes, Buckeye Seductress, **Margery Anderson-Clive**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Mac's Callow Fellow, Eternal Orbit, Cajun's Lil Joy; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Anne Nicholas**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Beginner's Luck, Lil Joy, Mac's Misty Meadow, **Penny Smith-Kerker**. Best Semiminiature: Sassy Shirley, **Ken Muzalewski**. Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Do; Best Species: *S. ionantha* var. *grandifolia*; Best Design, **Elmer Godeny**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Lil Georgie', **Bill Price**. Design Sweepstakes, **Glenda Williams**.

MID-ATLANTIC AVS, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Colossal, Buckeye Tea Party, Buckeye Nocturne; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Bed Bug, Lyon's June Bug, Boo Man; Best Species Collection: *S. 5b* clone *grotei*, *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis*, *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397; Best in Show/Best Standard: Sport of Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Semiminiature: Lyon's June Bug; Best Trailer: Foxwood Trail; Best Species: *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Sandy Skalski**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Mindi Morn, Wrangler's Spanish Cavalier, Anastasia, **Libbie Glembocki**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Bed Bug, Sassy Sister, Rob's Berry Shake,

Donna Brining. 2nd Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 6* clone *brevipilosa* Mather No. 10, *S. 5c1* clone Sigi Falls, *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid, **Susan Arnao.** Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia leucotricha* 'Telemaco Borba', **Jill Fischer.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Karyn Cichocki.**

MISSOURI VALLEY AV COUNCIL, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Coujon, Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion, Bishop; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rhapsodie Ingrid; Best Miniature: Windsome; Best Trailer: Tinari's Sky Blue Trailer; Best Species: *S. 5h* clone *velutina*; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **B.J. Ohme.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Delicate Touch, Ma's Blue Spinner, Ma's Happily Ever After, **Lynn Canning.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: California Sunset, Rob's Argyle Socks, Aca's Daphne; Best Semiminiature: California Sunset, **Terri Post.** 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Mister Sneezy, Cupid's Jewel, Rob's Scrumptious, **Sue Melson.** Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Bud's Stacy Lynn', **Brandon Erikson.** Best Design, **Judith Carter.**

NORTH STAR AV COUNCIL, MN – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Moon Child, Tatanka, Cajun's Fair Maiden; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Fair Maiden; Best Species: *S. rupicola*, **Gail Podany.** 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rebel's Star Song, Rockin' Romance, LiK-Tanets Flamingo; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cherry Princess, Heritage Frolic, Thunder Surprise; Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Carol Semrau.** Best

Miniature: Mac's Pizza Pizzicato; Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea* ht-1, **Patricia Kono.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Werness.**

PORTLAND AVS, OR – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ian-Minuet, Kei-Yoki, EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia; Best Standard: Heinz's Reminiscing; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Sunday; Best Miniature: Boo Man; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Cindi Nofziger.** Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Champ, Thunder Surprise, Rob's Bed Bug; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Apis', **Diane Reinmuth.** Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Wagga Wagga, **Tina Banks.**

TOWN AND COUNTRY AVS, CA – Winners: Best in Show/Best Standard: Arctic Frost; Best Semiminiature: Little Axel; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Joyce Dean.** Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Catnap'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Aneita Richarson.**

TRI-STATE AV COUNCIL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Blue Moonlight, Wild Irish Rose, Jersey Snow Drops; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jersey Sugar Plums, Ness' Mini Sota, Irish Flirt; Best in Show/Best Standard: Wild Irish Rose; Best Semiminiature: Jersey Sugar Plums; Best Miniature: Jolly Jingle; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski.** Best Species Collection: *S. 5b* clone *confusa*, *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather E, *S. rupicola*; Best Species: *S. 5b* clone *confusa*, **Janet Sierzega.** Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Rachel', **Betsy Sherwin.** Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Janice Murasko.**

AVSA Design
Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



*Sandia
Peak
Tramway
B.J. Ohme*

Coming Events

March 11 - CALIFORNIA

South Coast AVS
Judged Show/Sale
South Coast Botanic Garden
26300 Crenshaw Blvd.
Palos Verdes Peninsula, CA
Hours: 11am - 4pm
Culture Session: 10:30am
Info: Jacquie Eisenhut: jaceisenhut@gmail.com

March 11th - Omaha African Violet and Gesneriad Society

Annual Show & Sale 9am - 4pm
Mulhalls Nursery
3615 N. 120th St.
Omaha, NE 68164
More Info: scott.evans@unl.edu

March 11 & 12th - COLORADO

Rocky Mountain AV Council
Spring Show and Sale
March 11th - 9am - 4pm
March 12th - 9am - 3 pm
Tagawa Gardens
7711 South Parker Rd.
Centennial, CO
(303) 690-4722
Info: Trudy Brekel
violetlady7@msn.com
(303) 452-9015

March 17 & 18 - TENNESSEE

Memphis African Violet Society
Spring Show and Sale 10am - 4pm
Central Christian Church
531 South McLean Blvd
The corner of McLean and Peabody
March 17 10am - 5pm
March 18 10am - 4pm
Email: bakerbethrn@gmail.com
Beth Baker (901) 550-7860
<https://www.facebook.com/memphisavs>

March 18 - TEXAS

First Austin AVS 48th
Annual Judged Show/Sale
1 Day Only/New Hours
9am - 4:30pm
Austin Area Garden Center
Zilker Botanical Garden
220 Barton Springs Rd
Austin, TX 78746
Info: Susan Kautz (512) 365-1818
Email: gizmo@austin.rr.com
www.faavs.org

March 19 & 20 - LOUISIANA

Sundowners African Violet Society
2017 Annual Flower Show and Sale
"Rainbow of Violets"
March 19: 1:00 - 5:00pm
March 20: 11:00 - 3:00pm
Baton Rouge Garden Center
7950 Independence Blvd.
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
contact: Susie Smith
susiesmith@live.com
(225) 926 8483

March 25 & 26 - NEW YORK

March 25: 2pm to 5pm
March 26: Noon to 4pm
African Violet Show and Plant Sale
"Violets Celebrate Christmas"
Sweet Water AVS
West Sayville Volunteer Fire Dept
80 Montauk Highway
West Sayville NY

March 31 & April 1 - ALABAMA

Early Bird Violet Club of Birmingham, AL
"Fooling Around with Violets"
Birmingham Botanical Gardens
Hodges Room
No admission charge
2612 Lane Park Road
Birmingham, AL 35223

March 31: 2pm - 4pm
April 1: 9am - 3pm
Contact: Gwen Johnson (205) 991-5335

April 1 - CONNECTICUT

Windsor AVS Annual Judged Show/Sale
Grace Episcopal Church
311 Broad Street
Windsor, CT 06095
Hours: 8:30 am - 2:30pm
Info: Nancy Hayes (860) 930-6260
Email: violetnancy@comcast.net
<http://www.windsorafricanviolets.org/>

April 1 & 2 - MISSOURI

Sho-Me African Violet Club
Annual AVSA Judged Show/Sale
Jacob L. Loose Garden Center
52nd and Wornall
Kansas City, MO 64112
April 1 - 9am - 3pm
April 2 - 10am - 3pm
Info: Linda Hall (816) 550-4061
Email: linda.hall6641@hotmail.com

April 2 - TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

Toronto Gesneriad Society
Annual Show & Sale
TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN
Floral Hall, 777 Lawrence Avenue East
Toronto (North York), Ontario M3C 1P2
Open to the Public 9am - 4pm, April 2
Admission \$2.00
<http://torontogesneriadsociety.org>

April 2 - TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

Toronto African Violet Society
Annual Show & Sale
TORONTO BOTANICAL GARDEN
Floral Hall, 777 Lawrence Avenue East
Toronto (North York), Ontario M3C 1P2
Open to the Public
9am-4pm, April 2
Admission \$2.00
<http://www.tavs.ca>

April 7 & 8 - TEXAS

Dallas Metro African Violet Spring Show and Sale
Both days: 10am - 4pm
Many varieties of African Violets and
Other Gesneriads
Workshops on Care of
African Violets and other Gesneriads
Both days: 11am and 2pm
Public invited, no charge
North Haven Gardens
7700 North Haven
Dallas, TX 75230

April 7 & 8 - MINNESOTA

AVS of Minnesota Judged Show/Sale
Northtown Mall, 398 Northtown Drive N.E.
Blaine, MN 55434
April 7 - 10am - 7pm
April 8 - 10am - 4pm
Info: Pat Mattson
<http://sites.google.com/site/avsminnesota>

April 7 - 9 - VIRGINIA

Richmond AVS Judged Show/Sale
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
1800 Lakeside Avenue
Richmond, Virginia 23228
Sale: April 7th: 1pm - 5pm
April 8: 9am - 5pm
April 9: 9am - 4pm
Show: April 8: 1pm - 5pm
April 9th: 9am - 3pm
Free Admission
Info: Sharon Long (804) 740-5322
Email: slong15781@aol.com

April 8 - MICHIGAN

Michigan State AVS
Display & Sale: African violets,
Streps, & Other Gesneriads
April 8 - 10am - 4:00pm
Matthaei Botanical Gardens
1800 Dixboro Rd
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Info: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

April 8 - WASHINGTON

Seattle AVS and PS Gesneriad Society
 Annual Show and Sale
 Furney's Nursery
 21215 International Blvd
 Seattle, WA 98198
 Sale: 9:30am - 4pm
 Show: 1pm - 4pm
 For more info please email:
 SAVS: seattleafricanvioletociety @ yahoo.com
 PSGS: bobclark98122 @ gmail.com

April 8 - CONNECTICUT

Thimble Islands AVS Show/Sale
 April 8: 10am - 3:30pm
 Willoughby Wallace Library
 146 Thimble Islands Road, Exit 56 Branford
 Info: Madeline Clem (203) 481-9455

April 8 & 9 - OHIO

North Coast Gesneriad & African Violet Club
 Annual Judged Show/Sale
 Cleveland Botanical Garden
 11030 East Blvd., Cleveland
 April 8, 10a.m. - 5p.m.
 April 9, 12 noon - 5 p.m.
 Info: Penny Johnson (440) 286-8235
 kritterfeeder@hotmail.com

April 8 & 9 - NEW JERSEY

AV Club of Morris County
 Annual AVSA Judged Show/Sale
 Frelinghusen Arboretum
 353 E. Hanover Ave.
 Morristown, NJ 07960
 April 8 - 1:30pm - 4:30pm
 April 9 - 11am - 3 pm
 Info: Jill Fischer (908) 464-4417
 Email: HF.JG.Fischer@comcast.net

April 22 - CONNECTICUT

Naugatonic AVS Annual Judged Show and Sale
 10am to 5pm
 Homewood Suites by Hilton
 6905 Main St (exit 53 off Merritt Parkway)
 Stratford CT 06614
 Plants and supplies will be available for sale.

Contact: Roger Wheeler (203) 925-0427
 or rogerwwheeler@yahoo.com

April 22 - Oregon

Portland AVS & MT Hood Gesneriad Club
 Sale/Display/Education Table
 Hours: 10am-3pm
 Taber Heights Methodist Church
 6161 SE Stark
 Portland Oregon
 Info: (503) 631-3925
 alicemaebblue@yahoo.com

April 22 & 23 - OHIO

AV Societies of Cincinnati & Dayton
 Combined Show & Sale
 Eastgate Mall, 4601 Eastgate Blvd.
 Cincinnati, OH
 April 22: 10am - 9pm
 April 23: Noon - 4pm
 Info: Karen Cenci (513) 325-0395
 Email: kcenci@hotmail.com

April 22 & 23 - NEW YORK

Capital District AVS Judged Show/Sale
 St. Matthew's Church, Admission Fee
 25 Mountainview St., Voorheesville, NY 12186
 Apr 22: 1pm - 4pm
 Apr 23: Noon - 4pm
 Contact: Margaret Califano (518) 785-3107
 Margaret23Califano@gmail.com

April 29 - TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA

Lakeshore AVS of Toronto
 Presents: "Dancing With Violets"
 April 29th, 9am - 4pm
 Free Admission
 St. Philip's Lutheran Church
 61 West Deane Park Drive
 Etobicoke, Ontario M9B 2S1



April 29 & 30 - WISCONSIN

Oshkosh Violet Society
Annual Judged Show & Sale
St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall
531 Knapp St.
Oshkosh, WI
April 29 - 10am - 4:30pm
April 30 - 11:30am - 3:00pm
Info: Kevin Degner (920) 426-3764
kevin_degner@sbcglobal.net

April 29 & 30 - NEW YORK

"A Galaxy of African Violets"
AVGSS of Syracuse, New York
Location: Beaver Lake Nature Center
8477 East Mud Lake Road
Baldwinsville, NY 13027
Show and Sales:
4/29 - 1pm - 6pm
4/30 - 10am - 4pm
There is a \$4.00 parking fee.
Info: Linda Rowe
Bloominjungle@frontiernet.net

April 29 & 30 - MASSACHUSETTS

"Cooking with Violets"
Bay State AVS
Annual Judged Show & Sale
Tower Hill Botanic Garden
11 French Drive
Boylston, MA 10505
April 29 - 10am - 5pm
April 30 - 10am - 4pm
Check Tower Hill's Website for general info
and directions: www.towerhillbg.org
Admission Fee

May 6 - CALIFORNIA

Central Coast AVS
First Show/Sale
Saturday, May 6, 10am - 3pm
Brookdale Senior Living
1919 Creston Rd.
Pasa Robles, CA 93446
Info: Mary znailady1@aol.com
(805) 459 - 6070

May 6 & 7 - NEW YORK

May 6 - 1pm to 4pm
May 7 - 11am to 4pm
African Violet Show and Plant Sale
"African Violet Words of Wisdom"
Saintpaulia Society of Long Island (SSLI)
Planting Fields Arboretum
Convention Center
1395 Planting Fields Road
Upper Brookville, NY

May 6 & 7 - NEW JERSEY

Garden State African Violet Club
66th Annual Judged Show/Sale
Mercer County Community College
1200 Old Trenton Rd
West Windsor, NJ
May 6 - Noon - 4pm
May 7 - 11am - 3pm
www.princetonol.com/groups/GSAVC
On Facebook: Garden State African Violet Club
Email: GSAVCmail@gmail.com
(732) 771-7117
Free Admission

May 13 - WISCONSIN

Crosstown AVC
Annual Spring Sale
Olbrich Botanical Gardens
3330 Atwood Ave
Madison, WI 53704
Hours: 9am - 4pm
Info: Alice Peterson (608) 850-9740
Email: peters56@tds.net

May 20 - CALIFORNIA

AVSA Judged Show & Sale
Southern California AVSA Council,
Burbank & Montrose A.V.S.
Descanso Gardens (Van de Kamp Hall)
1418 Descanso Drive
La Canada, CA
Contact: Susan Eyraud (818) 951-3597
susaneyraud@yahoo.com

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

One of the advantages of lurking in various African violet social media groups is that sometimes a question comes along that opens up something new. A case in point was a recent discussion about some peculiar leaf markings on the Heinz Dornbusch hybrid 'Heinz's Seduction'. While I had often admired the pictures of the puff fantasy markings on the flowers of this hybrid, I had not seen the plant in person nor had anything been noted about markings on the foliage. As it turned out, the normally red-backed leaves of 'Heinz's Seduction' often have circles of non-pigmented areas. The circles look similar to birth-marking spots, but are much more regular in appearance and show the lack of red pigmentation instead of having red pigment spots on green backed leaves. What was striking about these circles was their regular appearance and similarity to the puff fantasy marks in the petals.



through two generations. Thus it appears that these markings are following a dominant genetic inheritance pattern. The circles are variable in expression, much like the puff fantasy markings that are in the flowers.

What I believe the circles in the red leaf backing represent is the fantasy trait of puff fantasy, but in this case expressed in the pigment system of the

leaves instead of the flowers. In other words, we now have "fantasy leaves" as well as "fantasy flowers". We know that fantasy flowers are caused by a genetic interruption in the pigment production system and randomly flips on/off. In the case of puff fantasy, the pattern in the flowers is usually faded circles of pale or no color. Fantasy flowers are a genetic dominant trait with variable expression between individuals from generation to generation. We also know that birth marks in the foliage often affect the flower color so foliage red backing and flower pigment production are linked traits. Therefore, the circles in the foliage of 'Heinz's Seduction' appear to be an example of puff fantasy foliage.

This discussion on social media led to a question regarding the flecks of color in the foliage of 'Tina's April Fantasy.' Sometimes called "Elf variegation" according to some in Europe, the light green foliage has dots and dashes of red pigment on the back of the leaves that are easily visible through the upper surface of the leaves.



*Heinz's
Seduction - Flower*



*Heinz's
Seduction - Foliage*

Heinz Dornbusch was kind enough to share the parentage of 'Heinz's Seduction'. The plant is a selfing from 'Dreamtime', a Margaret Taylor hybrid. Heinz hastened to add that his plant of 'Dreamtime' did not match the First Class description for 'Dreamtime' and was likely a sport of that plant. The parentage of 'Dreamtime' is: 'Rainbows Quiet Riot' x 'Ness' Laced Satin'. Heinz grew out some of the seedlings from the selfing. In the second flower, the colors and leaf markings of one seedling become more pronounced and the result was 'Heinz's Seduction'. Heinz has since used this plant in other crosses and found that the circular leaf markings will breed true



*'Tina's April
Fantasy' - Flower*



*'Tina's April
Fantasy' Leaf*

'Tina's April Fantasy' has very pale flowers with small dots of fantasy marks. This cultivar has often been cited as an example of fantasy on white back-

ground rather than pink. The background color of the flowers may not be pure white, but it is very pale compared to other fantasy flowered plants.

I hypothesize that 'Tina's April Fantasy' is also an example of fantasy marked foliage, but in this case the fantasy marks are of the dot fantasy type rather than the puff fantasy. When the fantasy marks activate in the foliage, the result is dots or dashes of red pigmentation. This is opposite of the fantasy marks in the foliage of 'Heinz's Seduction' where the fantasy removes pigment. I'm not aware of hybridizing efforts with 'Tina's April Fantasy', but I would predict that the foliage fantasy markings should inherit as a genetic dominant. However, I would recommend breeding to pale green foliage plants so that the fantasy marks are visible.

Fantasy flowers are one of our oldest mutations in African violets. The spots and stripes on the flowers are eye-catching and many cultivars have been produced with the fantasy flower mutations. It stands to reason that genetic mutation that causes disruptions in pigment production in the flowers could also occur in the red backing of the leaves. It just took the proper questions and pictures to bring fantasy leaves out for recognition by growers and hybridizers.

Q: How would you recommend that a hybridizer breed for this new fantasy foliage trait?

A: The puff fantasy of 'Heinz's Seduction' has already been proven to inherit as a genetic dominant. Since the fantasy trait in this case removes red pigment from the back of the leaves, use another red backed foliage plant in your cross. In this way, all or most of the seedlings should have red backed leaves and allow the non-pigmented fantasy spots to appear. It is doubtful that the fantasy markings would be visible on a green backed leaf so the trait could be present, but not visibly expressed.

You may need to grow promising seedlings to full size or through 2-3 bloom cycles to get the leaf fantasy trait to show up. Once you've established that a seedling has the trait, selecting leaves with higher numbers of fantasy markings for leaf propagation might intensify the trait in the next generation of babies. Remember that fantasy markings can change expression because of growing condition temperatures. The same has been noticed with the fantasy foliage markings.

Q: Could the fantasy leaf markings be combined with other foliage traits such as girl foliage or variegated foliage?

A: I think you would be successful in combining the fantasy leaf markings with girl foliage. Both are dominant genetic traits and it should take only one generation to combine the two traits together. The white base of the girl foliage leaf may reduce the area within the leaf for the markings so the fantasy marks might be few in number. You'll also need a girl foliage plant with dark red backing. That combination of traits is not particularly common so choose your girl foliage plant with care.

Combining leaf fantasy with variegation would be interesting, but you are likely to miss the expression of the leaf fantasy trait because of the non-colored variegated areas. The ideal cross would be with a Tommie Lou style variegated plant that has only a strong band of color on the outer edges of the leaves. As long as the centers remain dark green, the fantasy leaf markings will have a chance to be expressed. Since red leaf backing often turns the white variegated areas pink, the leaves might have an interesting combination of colors. I would think that trying to combine fantasy leaf markings with mosaic or crown variegation would be possible, but would be less likely to yield leaves with distinguishable markings.



Four Beauties

Exhibited and Photographed by Paula Bal



Amour Elite

Hybridized by: E. Arkhipov
Standard



Buckeye *Scrumptious*

Hybridized by: P. Hancock
Large

Radiant Glow

*Hybridized by: T. Davis
Standard*



Sweet Amy Sue

*Hybridized by: P. Harris
Standard Trailer*

Tally Time 2016

Susan Anderson • 4040 E. Maldonado Dr. • Phoenix, AZ 85042
www.avsa.org/tallytime • tallytime@avsa.org

The 2016 Tally Time annual report is a summary of the African violet varieties and species receiving the greatest number of awards in AVSA Standard Shows throughout the past year. This year's report summarizes results of 61 shows across six geographic regions. With careful review, you can learn which plants grow well in your area and are known to bring home top awards.

The winners included many well-known favorites and a few newcomers. Each would make a fabulous addition to your collection. Please share the joy of violets and AVSA by teaching others

about these beautiful plants.

Thanks to all participating affiliates for their timely submissions of reports. As a note, the Tally Time form has been updated. Please be sure you are using the latest version. It can be downloaded off the AVSA website. Results may also be submitted online at www.avsa.org/tallytime. It saves time and postage! To have show winners included in the annual summary, please send completed Tally Time forms via online entry, mail or email by November 20th. Enjoy growing and showing!

	Total Number of Awards	Number Best In Show	Number Second Best	Variety Hybridizer, Registration No.	Number of Collection Awards	Best Standard, Semi, Mini, Trailer or Species
STANDARDS	9	1	0	Jersey Snow Flakes R. Kurzynski #9820	7	1
	8	1	1	Buckeye Nostalgia P. Hancock #10484	3	3
	7	2	0	Buckeye Seductress P. Hancock #9669	3	2
	7	1	0	Frozen in Time Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano #9167	5	1
	7	1	0	Cajun's Fair Maiden B. Thibodeaux #10636	5	1
SEMIMIINIATURES	11	2	0	Thunder Surprise S. Sanders #9024	5	4
	10	1	1	Rob's Fuddy Duddy R. Robinson #7886	5	3
	9	0	0	Ness' Crinkle Blue D. Ness #8136	6	3
	6	1	0	Rob's Outer Orbit R. Robinson #8738	2	3
	5	1	1	Optimara Little Omaha Holtkamp #8321	1	2
	5	1	0	Cajun's Lil Joy B. Thibodeaux #10639	3	1
	5	0	0	Jolly Frills H. Pittman #9907	4	1
	14	0	0	Jolly Orchid H. Pittman #9719	7	7
	8	1	1	Precious Red H. Pittman #9724	1	5
MINIATURES	7	0	0	Orchard's Bumble Magnet R. Wilson #8479	3	4
	5	1	0	Jolly Blue Clouds H. Pittman #10017	2	2
	5	0	0	Rob's Jitterbug R. Robinson #8876	1	4
	5	0	0	Windsome H. Pittman #10116	1	4

	Total Number of Awards	Number Best In Show	Number Second Best	Variety Hybridizer, Registration No.	Number of Collection Awards	Best Standard, Semi, Mini, Trailer or Species
TRAILERS	7	1	1	Rob's Boolaroo R. Robinson #8053	1	4
	6	0	1	Milky Way Trail J. Stahl #7169	1	4
	5	1	0	Rob's Gundaroo R. Robinson #9294	2	2
	5	1	0	Rob's Galiwinku R. Robinson #8059	2	2
	5	0	0	Rob's Vanilla Trail R. Robinson #9296	1	4
SPECIES	17	1	1	S 5b clone confusa	6	9
	14	1	0	S 8 clone rupicola	9	4
	8	0	0	S 5c1 clone tongwensis	5	3
	7	1	1	S 5f clone orbicularis	2	3
	7	0	0	S 5c1 clone ionantha	4	3
	7	0	0	S 8 clone rupicola Cha Simba	5	2

Geographic Region, State/Province (Number of Shows):

Region I:	Arizona (2), California (6), Colorado (1), New Mexico (1), Oregon (1), Washington (1)
Region II:	Iowa (1), Minnesota (2), Missouri (3), Nebraska (2), Ohio (2), Wisconsin (2)
Region III:	Connecticut (2), Massachusetts (1), New Jersey (7), New York (5), Pennsylvania (2), Virginia (2)
Region IV:	Arkansas (1), Louisiana (1), Oklahoma (1), Texas (4)
Region V:	Florida (3), Georgia (2), Tennessee (1)
Region VI:	Alberta (1), Nova Scotia (1), Ontario (3)

The following table lists the award winners by geographic region.

	Variety	Total Number of Awards	Geographic Regions					
			I	II	III	IV	V	VI
STANDARDS	Jersey Snow Flakes	9	-	3	6	-	-	-
	Buckeye Nostalgia	8	2	2	3	-	-	1
	Buckeye Seductress	7	-	3	1	-	3	-
	Frozen in Time	7	1	1	3	1	1	-
	Cajun's Fair Maiden	7	1	5	-	1	-	-
SEMINIATURES	Thunder Surprise	11	3	3	5	-	-	-
	Rob's Fuddy Duddy	10	4	-	2	1	3	-
	Ness' Crinkle Blue	9	1	2	2	-	2	2
	Rob's Outer Orbit	6	-	-	-	5	1	-
	Optimara Little Omaha	5	-	-	-	-	-	5
	Cajun's Lil Joy	5	-	2	-	2	1	-
	Jolly Frills	5	1	3	1	-	-	-
MINIATURES	Jolly Orchid	14	1	3	4	1	2	3
	Precious Red	8	1	2	5	-	-	-
	Orchard's Bumble Magnet	7	1	3	1	2	-	-
	Jolly Blue Clouds	5	-	5	-	-	-	-
	Rob's Jitterbug	5	1	2	1	1	-	-
	Windsome	5	1	1	2	1	-	-
TRAILERS	Rob's Boolaroo	7	2	-	5	-	-	-
	Milky Way Trail	6	5	-	1	-	-	-
	Rob's Gundaroo	5	-	-	3	-	2	-
	Rob's Galiwinku	5	-	1	2	-	2	-
	Rob's Vanilla Trail	5	1	1	-	-	2	1
SPECIES	S 5b clone confusa	17	5	3	5	1	1	2
	S 8 clone rupicola	14	3	4	6	1	-	-
	S 5c1 clone tongwensis	8	1	1	3	1	-	2
	S 5f clone orbicularis	7	6	1	-	-	-	-
	S 5c1 clone ionantha	7	1	1	3	1	1	-
	S 8 clone rupicola Cha Simba	7	2	1	2	-	1	1
Number of Winners		221	44	53	66	19	22	17
Number of Shows Reported		61	12	12	19	7	6	5

Every Grower is a Judge

By Janet Sierzega

We all judge our plants whenever we look at them. This critique you do may lead you to correct any issues you see while growing. Attention to symmetry and condition will get you 50% of the way to your desired results. The additional judging of your African violets comes from the appreciation of your bloom.

For me, I have a daily routine that begins with "the call of the coffee." The automatic timer on my coffee pot is set for the same time as my clock radio. The aroma, the sound of the dripping coffee will encourage me to get out of bed. It's time to open the blinds and let in the sun for the violets. As I make my rounds I glance at the violets – giving a turn, picking off a leaf, or bloomstalk asserting itself before the plant has reached the desired size, and before starting Pauline Bartholomew's preshow schedule. Let no African violet bloom "before it's time," is my mantra, so I disbud as I go.

This daily round, of course with that cup of coffee in hand, keeps me thinking about the violets and making promises - to repot, get rid of necks, pluck suckers, and prioritize which shelves get watered next. There is sometimes the need for a rescue drink of water when individual reservoirs are getting low and might dry out before their section gets watered.

So what I am doing is putting in a little time each day to shape the plants and make brief adjustments to the collection before getting dressed and out the door for work. Form or symmetry is a basic for your plant and counts toward twenty-five points when scored by AVSA judges. The symmetry is not a last minute fix, so daily visits to the plant stands keep me aware of what is needed to get that rosette pattern, encourage petioles to grow straight out from the neck (sometimes adding tooth picks to redirect the growth), keep the rows of leaves overlapping to prevent gaps, and hide the soil from view. Trailers need their turns to keep leaves grow-

ing on all the crowns. Count your crowns – three are a must for shows. Any less will incur a deduction of eleven points, each which alone changes the ribbon status since ribbon scores are ten points apart. So keep them home and growing.

Promises must be kept. Ideally I would take the plants needing extra attention aside, on an empty shelf. But I don't have any. I usually count as I go. Six is my magic number. When I reach six of the same type, that issue becomes the weekend plant task. More than six and I find it a chore.

You can control condition. This is worth another twenty-five points. Ongoing grooming of your plants will keep them growing healthy. It is a must for your show plants, not only during growing, but prior to show, for last minute corrections. Keep in mind a show is a party where your plants need to look their best. When I water the African violets I examine each to make sure my quick daily pinching did not leave any stubs from leaves or flower stalks. This is also the time to search for hidden suckers.

Bath time becomes a promise. So when a plant in need of cleaning has five friends, I spray them with soap and water and rinse with room-temperature water. The plants sit overnight in the bathroom and if leaves still have water I paper towel dry them before placing them back on the shelves. Clean plants absorb more light and grow better. Plus clean plants are inspiring.

There is a trade-off between gaps in symmetry, which can lose up to three points, and losing one point for marred, broken, or damaged leaves. Sometimes you may want to keep one with a less desirable leaf for a show. But, while growing time can be a factor in allowing the plant to grow large enough to discard the damaged leaf, keep in mind that transporting your plants to a show can be hard on them. When I was packing for a recent show, my glue gun was not working properly. Two glued pots came off the plastic carrier and tumbled around for a while before arriving at Entries.

At last, when it comes to letting the African violets bloom, distribution of blossoms can be controlled on daily coffee rounds. Changing your fertilizer to a bloom booster may help, along with more time under the lights, to get the perfect blossom size for fifteen points.

Quantity of bloom is judged using twenty-five points. As you learn the expected bloom for the variety you are growing, you can determine how well your plant is progressing. Some violets are heavy bloomers, and some are reluctant. Your eye will tell you if you are on track when you look at the blooms in relation to the size of the plant: Standard, Semiminiature, Miniature, and Trailer.

Judges use a guide of large standards 20-25 blooms; small standards 10-15 blooms; semi miniature 10-20 and miniature 6-12. Points are deducted based on the ratio of blooms shown, to the number of blooms expected. Newer cultivars are more prolific bloomers than older varieties. Since I grow in natural light, the last month before show is crunch time. By then I have grouped the contenders for show in the best window light, and

do a bloom count on my daily rounds to decide if the plant will go to show.

Keep an eye out for blossom color, which contributes ten points to your overall score. Is the color what you expected from the hybridizer's description? If so then your plant is "blooming true" to the description. Soil, fertilizer, and light will impact color.

There are ten points of separation between a blue ribbon and a red ribbon. Some people believe you should not bring a plant to show if it can not earn a blue ribbon. If you only bring blue ribbon plants to shows you will not learn from the AVSA judges. Every exhibit is judged by a panel of three judges who need to agree on the final award. You may have been too harsh in your judging, and left a blue ribbon plant at home. Plants that do not score ninety, or greater, get comments from the judges on how the grower might improve.

Enjoy the process of growing your plants. I take pleasure in the calm I get working on my African violet collection, and the beauty they return from my efforts to care for them.



SENIOR JUDGES – IMPORTANT NOTICE

Senior Judges may apply for a renewal examination between May 1 and September 1, 2017. Send request to **Barbara Werness, 12354 Naples Street NE, Blaine, MN 55449. Include a check for \$5.00 payable to AVSA and proof of three blue ribbons** as per AVSA Handbook, 2016 edition, page 83.

You may receive the examination by email as a Microsoft Word document. If you require a hard copy by snail mail, allow up to three weeks for delivery. Please specify whether you prefer, electronic or hard copy.

A printed hard copy (not email) of the exam must be returned to Barbara Werness by October 1, 2017, for grading.

Those Advanced Judges who meet the requirements and wish to apply for their first Senior Judge examination, send a request to Barbara Werness. Include a check for \$5.00 payable to

AVSA. Also send the following items of documentation of eligibility per AVSA Handbook:

1. List of all judging schools attended, grades, etc.
2. Signed schedule of five AVSA shows judged (copy of signed title page with all show information is sufficient.)
3. Verification of three blue ribbons earned per AVSA Handbook, 2016 Edition, page 83.

Allow three weeks for delivery. Schedules and cards will be returned if a SASE is included with proper amount of postage. Applications postmarked after September 1, 2017, will be returned and application may be made next year.

No exams will be returned until after October 15, 2017. Please include email address and you will be notified of receipt of your exam or include a self-addressed postcard and it will be returned upon arrival of exam.



Photo Credit: Paris Merriam

Rebel's Splatter Kake

Exhibited by: Paris Merriam

Hybridized by: R. Bann

Large

Orlando DINING IN THE TROPICS



The Wyndham Orlando Resort is where the 71st AVSA Annual Convention will be held during the week of May 28th to June 4th 2017. Hosted by the African Violet Council of Florida, plans are underway to make this a magnificent show for all AVSA members.

During the busy convention schedule, members will want to find easy access to good dining. Close by is **Restaurant Row** famous for dining and shopping. Florida is famous for its seafood, but there many other cuisines available. Below are a few choices to whet your appetite:

The Bosphorus Turkish Cuisine is a family-owned restaurant that offers fresh and homemade Turkish food. There is authentic Lebanese cuisine at **Cedar's Restaurant**. **Christini's Ristorante Italiano** takes you to Italy for epicurean Old World delights. Find Fresh and unique Japanese food at **The Dragonfly**. The finest seafood and steaks along with world-class wine can be found at

EddieV's Prime Seafood. **The Moonfish** proudly announces that it has "the Freshest Seafood from the Oceans of Planet Earth," along with prime and choice mid-western aged steaks cooked over a natural wood-burning pit, and an intriguing sushi menu. Want a taste of South of the Border? Visit **Rocco's Tacos and Tequila Bar** which offers hand-made corn tortillas with the true taste of Mexico in a fun casual environment. **Seasons 22** asks you to visit their fresh grill and wine bar to enjoy seasonal dishes. Have a desire for rich creamy cheese and chocolates? Then drop into **The Melting Pot** to enjoy The Art of Fondue. Or come sit at **The Table Orlando** and taste the experience of local, seasonal New American Cuisine during a 5-course food and wine pairing.

All of these restaurants and others on Restaurant Row can be found at: <http://www.visitorlando.com/things-to-do/orlando-districts/restaurant-row>

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AVSA Design
Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Fetishes
B.J. Ohme



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Rob's Humpty Doo

Exhibited by: Kathy Hajner

From the Best Horticulture Showcase

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Semiminiature Trailer

Violets on the Move

By Josh McKinney
Madison, AL

After considering it for years, I finally decided to move south in the Fall of 2016. Growing up in Kentucky, and vacationing in warmer states, I longed for a milder climate during the winter. But what about my plant collection? I have several dozen African violets, plus gesneriads, as well as other houseplants. How would I transport them to Alabama safely? I knew I would have to pack them personally. There were a few things that needed to be done first.

If you have any duplicates or mature large houseplants, give some to family, neighbors, or friends, as it will make your move easier. Any plants that are diseased should be discarded, as they likely won't make the trip. Take cuttings of any sick favorites a few weeks before moving and clean them well with isopropyl alcohol or warm soapy water. Also, if you have a plant that is too large to transport but you would still like to keep it, take cuttings. Alternatively, you can take cuttings of all your plants and give away the mature plants if space is a premium. Just be sure to do this ahead of time to give the cuttings time to root. This reduces your chances of losing a variety.

Repot any plants that can't wait, but don't work on too many as you still have to pack your other belongings. Place your soil mix in plastic garbage bags, use twist-ties, and pack in boxes. I packed my fertilizer, labels, plastic pots and other plant items in these boxes as well.

Clean your plant shelves if they are soiled. I used a scrub brush with dishwashing soap and a garden hose, in the backyard. Dry, stack, (if applicable) secure with rope or cords and pack in floorboards or under-storage areas of the vehicle. Wrap any lights with old sheets, towels or bubble wrap so they do not break.

Choose boxes of appropriate size (not too large) that will hold several plants. Allow soil to be slightly dry so the leaves will be less like to break. Secure rootball and pot with sandwich bags and rubber bands if necessary. Wrap plants carefully on their sides with newspaper in a cone shape. Be sure the

rootball is at the bottom and crown on top. For some varieties, you may need to hold the leaves in a cone shape to start wrapping. Tape to hold the paper in place, but leave some breathing holes. For varieties with brittle leaves, wrap more loosely with newspaper or a plastic grocery bag. Pack plants in box and fill voids with plastic grocery bags or wadded up newspaper or other insulating material to prevent movement in transit. Depending on how they are being moved, you may not need to seal the boxes shut, but use enough tape to make sure they don't come loose. Larger houseplants only need a box to sit in, as long as they can't shift around during the trip. Again, use plastic bags (grocery or garbage bags work well) around the pots and loosely tie around the stems. Fill voids with spare plastic flower pots and grocery bags. For young plants or minis, you may not even need newspaper to wrap them. I used plastic zipper bags and packed them in the boxes.

It is best to move the plants in your personal vehicle, as climate control will be available and it is easier to observe them when you stop along the way. When stopping during warm weather, crack the windows slightly and park in the shade whenever possible. Don't leave them in a parked vehicle for any extended amount of time in extreme temperatures! If you must put them on a moving van, do not stack any heavy items on top of the plant boxes.

Once you arrive at your new home, unpack plants as soon as you are able. Choose a window with bright indirect sunlight. Remove any broken leaves and water any plants as needed. Re-assemble your plant shelves and arrange the plants leaving sufficient growing room between them. I hope your move goes as smoothly as mine with only a few broken leaves. Moreover, some of the violets in the living area are doing well in a sunny south window with blinds to reduce the intensity. In conclusion, if you properly prepare, your plants will reward you with beauty for years to come in your new home!

Are LED Fixtures Ready for the African Violet Growers Yet?

There's more to the story than meets the eye

By Neil Lipson

I have been a lighting engineer since the 1970s and used that knowledge in growing violets AND photographing them properly.

Probably the question I'm asked the most is whether to move to LED lighting from fluorescent lamps for growing violets. Many people think that because they're new and a little more efficient, that their plants would benefit from the purchase. Well, it didn't turn out that way for a few reasons.

LED lamps and fixtures have been around for a few years, but I have found them unsuitable for growing violets. The reasons are the kind of light that they emit. The light level and the distribution of the light onto the plants is not suitable. Here's what I found:

Fluorescent lamps have a balance of the light spectrum that is ideal for violets. The two colors that the plants benefit from in that light source are the blue and red spectrums. Blue is for growth and chlorophyll production, and red is for blossoms. You also need the other colors so you can physically see how the plants are growing and observe the appearance of the plant, which is necessary for the shows we enter.

There have been numerous experiments with trying to grow violets under different LED fixtures, some by the large commercial growers as well as by individual growers in various fashions. The experiments by the individual growers were NOT scientific in nature, and these well-intentioned growers did not do what is typically called in the scientific field a "double-blind study."

Some of the mistakes made were to grow one variety under the LEDs and another variety with the fluorescents. Some did not use the same soil, and there were many differences, just in the

growing conditions themselves. Even something minor like having two shelves, one with fluorescents and the other with LEDs would affect the results, as the higher shelf would have slightly higher temperatures.

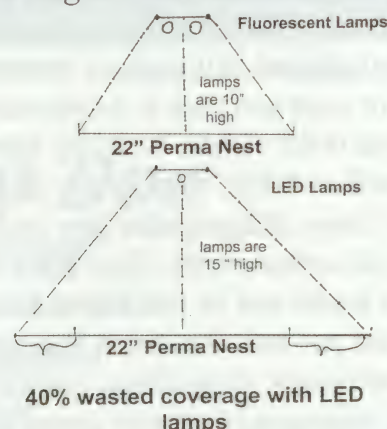
To see how much success the growers were having with their plants in shows, I went onto one of the popular website forums and posted this:

"Of the growers who have won a Best in Show award, which type of lighting did you use?"

Of the nine responses, **all** of them used fluorescent lamps, and not one used LED lamps.

The reasons are fairly obvious:

1. Fluorescent lamps have been around for decades, and all of the fixtures made to grow violets have been designed around the 2-foot or 4-foot-long fixtures.
 2. The fluorescent lamps have almost the exact color balance AND intensity to grow the plants, usually about 10" from the top of the plant in general.
 3. Because the fixtures are designed to concentrate the light specifically on the trays, there is no wasted lighting in "spill" over the trays.
- Here is a diagram that illustrates the point:



And, here is a photo inside Bird's Botanicals where they use LED lamps for their plants in general. The colorization difference in the appearance of the people and the plants when they are used is dramatic. This could complicate a Growing to Show application.

The purpose of this article is to warn growers



that just because something is new, does not automatically mean that it should be used. Tried and true is the motto I use.

I would like to thank Carolee Carter for her help, both technically and proofreading.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.

AVSA – Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner, Chairman • 12916 Midfield Terrace • St. Louis MO 63146

October 1, 2016 - February 1, 2017



Thumbprint - Under \$25

Barbara Werness
Nellie Reese

AVS of Philadelphia

*In lieu of judging expenses
for Susan Arano, Grace Egan,
and Teresa Celano*

Arthur Frederickson

Nancy Frost

Brenda Walker

Valerie Knight

Allison Waters

Sheryl J. Farlin
Elizabeth Fenske
Martha Nix
Annette Hershkowitz
Samura James



Two Tone - \$25-\$49

Spring Branch / Texas
Barbara Taswell Miller
Naugatonic AVS / CT
Crosstown AVC / TX



Multicolor - \$50-\$99

Kathy Bell
Billings Bloomers / MT



Geneva - \$100-\$499

Ohio State AVS
Karen Piourde
Melissa Shopnitz

TOTAL: \$727.00

AVSA Design
Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Ristra
Danny Tidwell



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

The Alps

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan

From the 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection - Best The Alps - Best Chimera

Hybridized by: K. Horikosh / H. Sawara
Standard

Speaking the Same Language

By Cheryl Sandquist

Sometimes when you learn a new hobby, you also learn a new language. Many terms used when reading or discussing African violets were foreign to me as a new violet hobbyist.

I did not know the language and found it confusing. To save you from a similar experience, here are some *need-to-know* terms for the new violet hobbyist:

What are violets? The **Gesneria** (ges-nair-ee-ah) family is a vast and varied group of flowering plants, including African violets, *Streptocarpus*, *Aeschynanthus*, and *Gloxinia*, among others, that have become popular as houseplants.

Saintpaulia (saint-paul-ee-a), commonly known as African violets, are a genus of up to thirty species of herbaceous flowering plants in the family *Gesneriaceae*.

Are they big plants or small plants? African violets come in different sizes. These plants can be classified as one of several sizes based on its above ground diameter. Although the size per category is not set in stone, here are some general guidelines:

Single crowned plants:

- **Micro-miniature:** very small leaves (a hybridizer's term used to describe the very small growing plants)
- **Miniature:** up to 6 inches in diameter
- **Semi-miniature:** up to 8 inches in diameter
- **Standard:** over 8 inches in diameter
- **Large:** a term hybridizers use to denote large growing varieties
- **Trailers:** violets that have more than one crown (need at least three crowns to win a blue ribbon) and come in all the sizes listed above.

What else do I need to know when talking to other violet enthusiasts? According to *Growing To Show* (2008), a violet enthusiast can define the following terms:

General terms:

Cultivar or **variety** or any African violet that is different from another, a result of hybridization or sporting.

Hybridization: Taking pollen from one violet and transferring it to the stigma of another to obtain seeds. The hybridizer breeds violets and the resulting plant is called a hybrid.

Vintage violets were introduced at least twenty-five years prior to the year in which it is to be entered in a show.

Terms to describe the plant:

Sport: A plant that shows marked change from the parent plant; usually a natural mutation.

Crown: A center of growth with all the leaves originating from that center radiating out like spokes on a wheel.

Chimera: Blossoms with stripes that radiate from the center.

Peduncle: The stalk supporting flowers.

Tailored: A plain African violet leaf on which the areas between the veins are slightly raised. (May also be called "quilted.")

Optimara: Popular trademark for African violets introduced since 1977 to the present, by Holtkamp Greenhouses.

Wasp: Blossoms are single and each lobe is very narrow and separated from the others.

Petiole: The stem of the leaf attaches the leaf to the main stem.

Girl (leaf): Deeply scalloped leaves, usually rounded or heart-shaped with white to yellow marking at the base of each leaf (has nothing to do with the sex of the plant).

Longifolia: Narrow, pointed, strap-like leaves with either plain or wavy edges.

Supreme: Leaves are thick, hairy, and quilted, with strong pencil-like petioles.

Now that you know some of the basic terms, I would encourage you to join AVSA and become part of a violet club to extend your terminology and discover the fascinating world of violet hobbyists.

An Outdoor Adventure with an Episcia

By Bonnie Harris

I have been growing African violets since back in the 1970's. Occasionally, along the way I would grow various other gesneraids, but I always dedicated most of my growing space to the violets.

In the last few years, I have started growing some episcias. The ones I currently have growing are *Episcia* 'Temptation,' because of its beautiful color of foliage, *Episcia* 'Cleopatra,' because I love the pink, *Episcia* 'Star of Bethlehem,' because I love the unusual blossom, *Episcia* 'Silver Skies,' because it is just so darn cute and small, and *Episcia* 'Jim's Canadian Sunset,' because it grows and produces stolons in abundance. In fact, it produces so many large stolons that I have rooted and given them away to all my friends until they don't want them anymore.

Our club had our show and sale for 2016 in April. I took a lot of *Episcia* 'Jim's Canadian Sunset' and sold many of them, but came back home with quite a few. And, there were already stolons in the rooting box ready to be potted up. So, what do should I do with all these extra plants? I considered just dumping a bunch in the trash can, but it is hard for me to throw away healthy plants. Then I thought about a bare spot in my front flowerbed. Would they grow outside?

Who knows, but I was about to find out. I took eight pots of them outside and with my husband's help, they were planted in the flower bed like a

ground cover. These were plants growing in 3 oz. Solo cups and were already producing stolons. The area where they are planted is about four-feet long and eighteen inches wide. It is on the north side of my garage so is shaded from the overhang on the garage. No tree in the yard, so nice bright light but not direct sun. This was in April. I wish I had taken a photo when they were first planted, but I really was not expecting them to do so well.



I live in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex in North Texas and we are known for our hot summer heat.

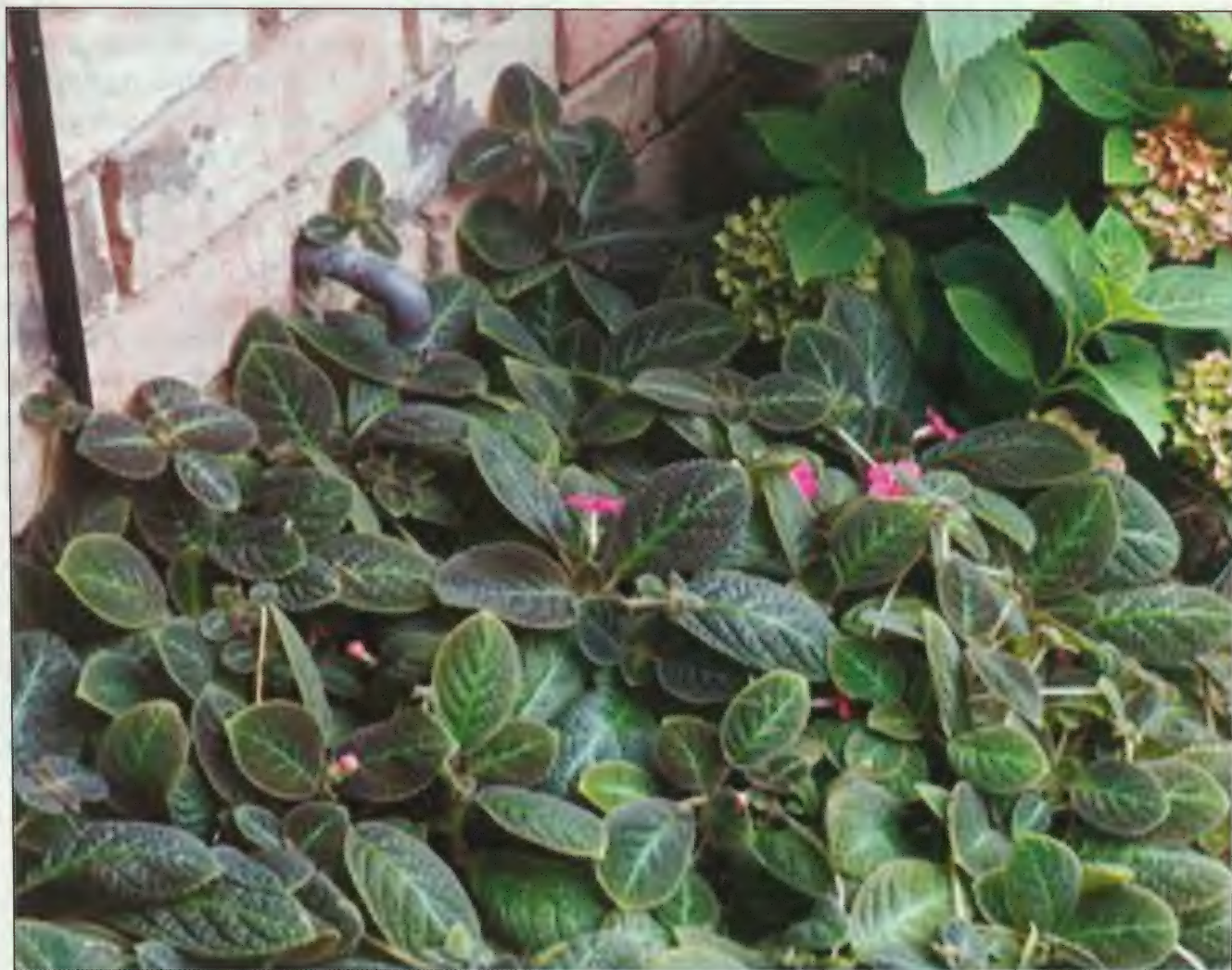
At the beginning of August we had several weeks of over 100 degree temperatures. And the episcias were loving it! In picture 1 you can see that I have a ceramic 'garden gator' that is in the area where the episcias are. By the first of August all you could see was the end of his tail. And by the time I took pictures 2, 3 and 4 he was totally covered up. The episcias are growing out onto the sidewalk and are mounded up against the wall of the garage.



And you can see they are happily blooming and producing stolons all over the place.

The next challenge is what to do with it this winter. I will be trying to cover it to pro-

tect it when we get cold weather and see if it will make it through the winter. If not, there will always be more stolons to plant next spring.



Combating Virus

By Bruce Pearson

Being relatively new at growing African violets, I hesitate to offer growing suggestions. However, I have been in the nursery business for over fifty years growing mainly orchids, bromeliads, and vegetatively-produced ornamentals, so I do have some growing experience.

I am seeing a horticultural practice used in orchids and bromeliads etc., that is not being observed by many growers of Gesneriads. Back in the 1960's "Color Break" Virus in orchids showed its ugly face. People thought it was the result of tobacco smoke being exposed to the plant. Within only a year or two, many collections were devastated, including mine. The culprit was cutting tools. People just went from one plant to the other cutting away, contaminating the instrument and thus spread the virus from one plant to the next. Much like disease is spread reusing needles in humans. Virus is possibly just past the incubation stage now in African violets so BEWARE!

There is a very simple solution and that is to "flame" any tool that is in contact with one plant to another. This can be accomplished using a cigarette lighter or better yet a cheap charcoal lighter and flaming the blade. In orchids, and for pruning shears, it is quicker to use a torch.

Isopropyl alcohol and several other sterilants are not 100% effective. It takes too much time to sterilize, if in fact it does. 70% alcohol is not as sterile as many people think. I am not sure of the 91% that has come out onto the market. I discovered this fact in orchid culture working under sterile conditions and using alcohol to sterilize equipment. I contaminated almost a

month's worth of flasks before discovering the problem.

When the alcohol was replaced with fire, the problem was solved. Anyway, it takes too long to obtain sterility using a chemical while a flame is quick and almost instant.

Simply getting into the habit of flaming any blade for a few short seconds that penetrates the tissue of a violet before going to the next plant, will keep the virus from spreading via the sap.

It is not necessary to flame multiple times when cutting on an individual plant, only when moving onto the next. Once a plant is infected with a virus it is infected and sterilizing the blade multiple times for the same plant will not cure or

stop it in that particular plant. It will only prevent inoculating the next plant.

Another note, sterilants and disinfectants are much more harmful to the environment and possibly the person in contact with them than fire.

Get into the habit of flaming your tools anytime you make a cut from plant to plant. Once a virus enters the violet, it is there for the life of the plant, just waiting to be taken to its next victim. This holds true for any type of plant.

The reuse of pots may also be another means of virus transferring, but I am not certain with this. To be safe, use new pots or soak old pots in chlorox or physan solution overnight.



Bruce Pearson

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Quarantine! Why and How You Should Isolate New Plants and Leaves

By Sandy Skalski

You just acquired some new plants or leaves of choice, of the African violet or gesneriad varieties and you can't wait to see them grow and bloom. Let's put those new plants and leaves right in with our collection so they can get the best light and growing conditions. We'll just pluck the blooms off and perhaps spray them, and they will be fine, right?

STOP!

You are about to make a huge mistake. Plants from even the most reliable sources should be isolated from your collection until you are sure there are no insects or diseases.

But these plants look clean and healthy! Well, they probably are clean and healthy. Odds are there are no problems with plants from a reliable source. However, sometimes problems are not obvious. I have gotten beautiful plants that had soil mealy bugs show up after a few months. Did you know that mites can also remain dormant in the soil, just waiting for an opportunity to multiply? It may take months for plants with more serious issues like fungal diseases and viruses to show symptoms.

Adding new plants and leaves is part of the fun of our hobby, and I don't want to discourage you from doing that. I want to make it less risky. First, let common sense be your guide. Any plant you acquire should appear clean and healthy from the start. I won't accept any plants with obvious signs of pests or diseases. Why invite trouble? Insects become resistant to pesticides, so if somebody else could not kill them, maybe I won't be able to either. I remove all buds and blossoms. I put the plants in a sealed Sterlite or spinach container with a sticky card and place them under a sepa-

rate light or in a window in a back bedroom, completely removed from my main collection. I check the sticky card for a couple months to be sure there were no thrips. If I see thrips, I will discard the plants. The presence of thrips increases the risk that the plants were exposed to INSV, a disease spread by thrips. If all looks well, I report them and keep them in their sealed container for up to a full year. Yes, I did say a year.

A year probably sounds excessive to most growers. It may be longer than needed, but I have decided on my risk tolerance and it is quite low. You need to determine your own 'risk tolerance' in order to decide how long you will isolate those plants. Here are three things to consider.

1. Your degree of Paranoia

How paranoid am I? I lost an entire collection of hundreds of plants to INSV, Impatiens Necrotic Spot Virus. This is a virus disease that is only spread by the Western Flower Thrips and a few similar thrips species. I made the difficult decision to throw away ALL of the plants in my basement growing room, even the baby plants and leaves, after consulting with a plant pathologist. She suggested that I did not know where the virus came from so how did I know the baby plants were not infected? How did I know that infected thrips pupae were not in the soil of the healthy looking plants? How did I know the healthy looking plants were, in fact, healthy? It can take months for virus symptoms to show up and some plants show no or very subtle symptoms. Why take a chance on infecting a new collection just to save a few plants? Hundreds of plants went into large trash bags. The only plants I had left were a few growing in a back room upstairs. Once

the mess was cleaned up, I resolved never to go there again. So I isolate for a full year, in a warmer back room where the virus symptoms are more likely to appear. Since then, I have intercepted three different opportunities to re-infect my collection. The growers of those plants had no idea the plants were infected. Enough said.

2. How much have you got to lose?

How many plants do you have? If you are just starting your collection, you may not have that much at risk. However, even 10 or 20 plants may be precious to you, so it pays to be careful. I have decided that the plants in my main collection are valuable enough that I won't risk them for the sake of one or two new plants. I can wait until they are growing well and are well established, as my shelves are already full.

3. How sure are you of your source?

Where did you get the plants or leaves? Where did THEY get their plants? And so on. All it takes is one mistake somewhere down the growing chain. I buy from our commercial growers because they are experts and know how to keep trouble at bay. I will also be less cautious with plants or leaves I get from my own club or trusted trading partners. I know they follow the same strict isolation procedures, so they may not get the full year in isolation. I also know that they would tell me if something suspicious showed up in their collections. I avoid 'blind' trades and round robins. I have purchased hard-to-find varieties on ebay, but those plants won't be moved to my main collection for a long time.

So that's the WHY, how about the HOW?

Isolation is easier than you think. Ziplock bags, repurposed lettuce bins, clear storage containers and domed tray covers can all isolate new plants from your main collection. I keep my new acquisitions in another room, but if your space is limited, consider putting your sealed isolation containers right on the shelves. When I restarted



my collection, all of the plants were in sealed containers and the plants did well in the increased humidity. The photo shows some plants in isolation right on the light stand.

Here are some things to keep in mind when you set up your isolation system. Pests like soil mealy bugs will spread from one plant to all of the others in the container, so if you have plants from different sources, you may want to isolate separately. Keep the plants disbudded while in isolation, as the blossoms tend to rot in the high humidity. Take care not to overwater. Remember, if you keep your isolation container near your main collection, take it into another area to open it.

Keep good records. I use a spread sheet that lists the plant name and description, the source of the plant and the date acquired. You can also include data such as when you repotted and how long it takes the plant to come into bloom.

If you do find pests in your isolated plants, you can decide to treat them. It is much easier to treat a few plants than treat an infestation that has spread throughout your entire collection. Do a thorough job. Typically, it takes a minimum of three treatments to eliminate pests. Consult reliable sources for the timing between treatments and be sure you have eliminated the pests. A piece of sticky card in the container can alert you to thrips.

Don't neglect plant maintenance while your new acquisitions are in isolation. Repot every few months and groom the plants, removing imma-

ture leaves, blooms, and buds. If a plant fails to thrive despite good care and attention, you should seriously consider sending it to the trash can. This is the reason you isolated the plant in the first place. As disappointing as it is to lose a plant, better one plant than your entire collection.

At some point you will decide that your new plants are healthy and ready to be introduced to your main collection. If they have been growing in sealed containers, they are used to higher humidity and should be watched to be sure they

don't dry out and wilt. I sometimes put a loose, clear plastic bag over the plant until it is used to the new conditions. Isolated plants are sometimes cramped so as new leaves grow, trim away the older leaves to allow the new foliage to come in flat and symmetrical. Repot the plants if needed. They will appreciate the fresh soil and be eager to put out new leaves.

That wasn't so bad, was it? Are you ready to add new plants to your collection? Race you to the sales room!



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Raspberry Glitz

Exhibited by: Susan Shaw

Hybridized by: P. Sorano

Semiminiature

AVSA Design

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



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It's a Good Life

By Claire Ulanoff

Ah. Monday morning, 7:30 a.m. The start of another work week. People are starting to arrive at the office and the fluorescent lights are coming on. I love the fluorescents. They make me feel like waking up and stretching. The coffee starts brewing in the kitchen and I hear the sound of voices down the hall. I love Mondays. That's the day my person comes back after the weekend and hey! Here she comes now! She's walking into our cubicle and turning on my overhead lights. It's showtime!

My name is Cora. Actually my full name is 'Rhapsodie Cora'. I live at the office with my friends, Patricia and Joan. During the week I spend my time on a shelf in my human's cubicle, looking beautiful. On the weekends I get to spend my time looking out the big picture windows in the conference room where I can see my city, Nashville, and watch all the things going on downtown. Sometimes if the weather is nice and the air is clear, I can almost see to East Nashville where I was born at the Optimara greenhouses. There were lots of us babies in those nurseries but now they're scattered all over the world. I got lucky and stayed in the neighborhood.

Now, I do not like to gossip but I have to tell you that some of my shelf mates have got way too much attitude for their own good. I mean, seriously, Harlequin? 'Optimara Harlequin' does not dress for an office job. She wears the biggest red and white blooms

I've ever seen around here and 'Chico', well 'Chico' just tries to outdo everyone else with his excesses of flowers. Some of us just don't know when to quit, especially that trailer my person brought here from a violet convention. That girl is all over the place!

One time my person had to rescue one of my cousins who was in very bad shape with two heads on two really long twisty necks. She was living in a flower pot that had a post-it note on it that said "HELP ME!" and one morning my person found it on her desk. Anyone else would have sent her to that great compost heap in the sky, but my person knew just what to do, performed a little surgery, and now we have two little 'Millennias' growing with us. It's nice having babies around!

Then there's Granny. We like to call *Saint-paulia ionantha* "Granny" because she tells us stories about our old homeland with the mountains and the river banks and the shady spots and about how we all came from Africa so many years ago. On Friday afternoons we all gather around her when the day is winding down and the light is fading to gold and purple outside our window, and we can almost feel the rocks and sand under our roots. And then my person waters and feeds us, which is not something to turn your petals up at - good friends, good food, man - it's a good life!

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Propagating Chimeras: A Great Use For African Violet Necks

By Linda Sumsk

I never thought I would say this, but I love African violet necks! Well actually, I love them when it comes to propagating chimeras.

My chimera, 'Victorian Parasol,' had developed a two-inch long neck when I finally got around to repotting it. With such a long neck, my only option was to restart the crown. Not wanting the neck to go to waste, I decided to force it into suckering. When I removed the crown, I chose to cut it off just above its last row of leaves.

My efforts were a success! I harvested two suckers shortly after the original leaves died away. A few small suckers remained. Eventually, I harvested two more suckers, leaving the neck to produce another round, which you see in the photos provided. I successfully harvested nine suckers before the neck was totally spent.

To help encourage suckering, I kept the pot with the violet neck, loosely wrapped in a large plastic baggie, making sure the plant had plenty of humidity. I also made sure the potting mix never dried out. It was kept moderately moist, but never soaking wet. Then every so often, I would scrape away a small area of the callused tissue along the side of the neck hoping this would encourage suckering. Most of all, I never removed a sucker until a new one appeared.

I have since learned it is not necessary to leave a row of leaves on the neck when forcing it to sucker. I tried this method with my other chimera, 'Roller Rink,' and it produced seven suckers before finally drying up.

Suckers are easy to root. Just fill a pot with your regular potting mix; moisten, then place the sucker on top. Make sure the cut area underneath is in full contact with the potting mix. If needed, use a bobby pin, wire, or toothpick to hold it in place.

Cover with a plastic baggie. Make sure the potting mix stays moist, but not soaking wet. The sucker will take root very quickly, sometimes in just a few weeks. I usually leave mine covered for at least a month.

Even with non-chimera violets, I find this method quicker than leaf propagation. Give this method a try and see what you think!



Neck from 'Victorian Parasol' used to produce suckers.



Chimera violet with its old neck and four new plantlets.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Rob's Peedletuck

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Semiminiature

Secrets and Tips of the Super-Growers

By Neil Lipson

After growing for thirty-five years and speaking to almost every "expert" in our African violet world, I have made a mental note of their great ideas. Here are some of the best ones:

STARTING A NEW CROWN

I have always taken a serrated knife to cut off the crown. However, at the MAAVS show, where I was a panelist with three other growers; Marie Burns recommended that you break the crown off instead of cutting it. She (and I) didn't think this was a good idea initially, but Marie said that Paul Sorano told her he got the idea from his grandfather. My first thought was, "well what's so special about his grand... Oh wait! He was Lyndon Lyon!" Marie said that indeed, it did grow faster. You never know.

IMMUNOX for mildew and many other fungal problems

I tried numerous anti-fungals, but found out that Spectracide Immunox was the best. However, when the MAAVS panel discussed how to use it, we were warned NOT to spray the center of the plant. It seems to act as a mild growth hormone and can cause twisted centers. In all my violet-growing years, I never heard of that!

pH BUFFERING OF YOUR SOIL

For years, the conventional wisdom was to use dolomite *granules* to adjust the pH in your soil. However, the granules will take weeks or more to break down in order to change the pH over that period. It turns out that dolomite lime *powder* will adjust the pH in a week or so, with less "drift." I did an experiment, where my Promix BX had a pH of 5.7 right out of the bag. I felt this was a little too low, so I adjusted the pH.

I measured fourteen cups of the soil mix, and

added two heaping teaspoons of dolomite power and thoroughly mixed it. I then used my one-to-one method to check the pH (one Solo cup of soil mix and one Solo cup of distilled water). The 5.7 pH went to 5.9 the next day and after about a week, it reached 6.4. The fastest rise occurred during the first day or two, and then slowly headed for a stable pH of about 6.4 after four days, and appeared to be headed to about 6.6 after a week or two. In the science field this is referred to as an exponential rise. This short period is MUCH faster than using dolomite granules, which can take a month or two.

That would cause some plants to have a culture shock, which you always want to avoid. The other lesson here is to plan ahead, have patience, and defer accepting the test results the day after adding the lime but to WAIT at least a week. (Thinking that the pH hasn't risen enough and subsequently adding more lime a day or two after adding the first dose **will have disastrous results a month later to any plants you have repotted in this mix.**)

MEALY BUGS

It was thought that the best way to treat for Soil Mealy Bugs was to measure some Marathon and sprinkle it on top of the soil. There were two problems: one was the mealies would acclimate to it and it would stop working, the second was that the mealies, which have hard waxy coatings, would avoid it by going into pockets of non-treated soil.

The best solution is really to use the same ingredient, Imidacloprid, in liquid form, diluted per the manufacturer's recommendations and drench the soil. Most of the time, this one treatment will get them all. If not, drench again, about a week later.

PROPAGATION OF VIOLETS

The best propagation techniques are, as described above, break off the crown and plant. For leaves, remove from the plant and cut the petiole at a 45degree angle with an alcohol-cleaned razor or scalpel. When cutting off the top half of the leaf to stimulate growth, do NOT use scissors, but a razor or scalpel. Scissors will traumatize the leaf at the cut location and will start rotting. I have seen some violets that are so hardy, that everything works, and others, like Betty Bryant's 'Ann,' that will require some heroic measures.

BRINGING A NEW PLANT INTO YOUR COLLECTION

Everyone knows about isolating your new additions, but I go one step further and do the following: I water the soil with Bonide Tree and Shrub (1/2 T per gallon), pour off the extra, put the violet in a plastic bag and spray with AVID. Make a small opening in the top of the bag, spray, and seal immediately. This will "cook" the plant by keeping the insecticides inside the bag, and in a few weeks, almost all of the violets treated this way will be free of insects, if not all.

I have been doing this for eight years and have NOT had thrips or insects on any new plants in my collection.

WHAT KIND OF LIGHTING IS BEST FOR VIOLETS

The question I'm asked the most is whether to switch to LED lamps. As a lighting engineer, I knew that these lamps at this time were NOT specifically designed for violets. However, many growers have tried using them. At a major show, I asked the audience if there were any best-in-

show winners, and many people raised their hands. When I asked how many of them used LED lamps, all the hands went down.

The lamps need to be designed with the proper red/blue ratio, but this has not been determined for violets yet. I do expect that in the future, this will be addressed allowing growers to successfully use them as their lighting choice.

FAILURE TO HAVE YOUR FAVORITE PLANT ELSEWHERE AS A "BACKUP"

When I lost Sugar 'n' Spice nine years ago, all five plants reverted at the same time. They were all in the same room, and in one week this chimera turned solid blue. No one else had it until two years later when I found it on my chiropractor's shelf. I asked him WHERE HE GOT IT! He said "Neil, you gave it to me two years ago." When it comes to chimeras, be generous, and give it to friends who live elsewhere.

I share plants with some growers and use Paula Bal as a backup. It was a running joke that one week, she would call me for a plant that I had, and six months later, I would call her for the same plant. That has happened too many times to tell. Remember, chimeras must be propagated by a sucker, so you CANNOT pull off a few leaves to start a new plant.

Most of these tips are from real experts that assumed that other growers already knew this information. Unless you discuss this with others, no one will ever find out, so sharing is important. I would like to thank Carolee Carter for her technical input, the tip that she provided and the proofing of the article.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1 pm Eastern time. He will return your call.



Grandma O's African Violet

By Bart Wesilenko

Forty-six years ago I won the heart of a young Irish girl with auburn hair and twinkling blue eyes. On an particular Easter a few years after we were "going steady," my young lady took me to her grandma's house in the quant village called Weed-sport, in central New York.

Louise O'Connell, the wife of the justice in the village, was more affectionately known as Grandma O'. When I first met her I felt a special bond knowing that she was a kindred spirit. In the corner of the dining room in the small saltbox-styled house I saw a lighted stand with many colored blooms from African violets.

I was instantly drawn to that corner of the room and exclaimed with delight at how beautiful her plants were. Grandma O' asked me if I was a gardener. I responded that indeed I was. My Mom had always told me that I was true to my namesake who was my grandfather and he was a great gardener. His garden was made up of the things that were necessary for survival in the hard times before the Great Depression. My Mom told me that he could grow almost anything and often brought in enough from his small garden to sustain his family of seven children and his wife through the winter.



Now back to my story of Grandma O' and our mutual bond which became a love of African violets. I asked Grandma O' how to grow these beautiful plants, and she was more than happy to share her knowledge with me. She asked if I wanted to start with some leaf cuttings and of course I said, "Yes!" She explained to me just how to root the African violet leaf by placing it in a small bag of perlite with just a little bit of shredded peat moss. I was thrilled and having a special souvenir as a remembrance of the first time that I met this very special lady. Not only was she a great gardener, but she was also a great cook.

To this day, our family's tradition on Easter is to serve the exact same meal that we had together many years ago as a tribute to Grandma O' and the wonderful meals that we would share in the future. A couple of years later I would marry that Irish girl and we would live in the same village with my wife's grandma. The house that we occupy today belonged to Grandma O's aunt and uncle. It stands as an example of the late Victorian era Italianate style, with many African violets gracing and beautifying the windows and in several rooms of this house. The house, with its detailed Victorian designs, inside and out is now on the National Historic Register, and known as the Tryon House.

Grandma O' lives on through her love of African violets which she has transferred into my heart. In fact, I still have one of the African violets today that belonged to her mother when she went to a county fair. That African violet is 'Blue Girl' and is one of the hardiest African violets in my collection today. When people see my African violet collection, I am always sure to tell them of the story of Grandma O' and her beautiful African violets. I also point out the African violet that has endured many many years, and now is the focus of my beautiful collection. I don't know exactly how old this particular plant is, but it is one of my favorites. I

know it's name is 'Blue Girl,' but I call it Louise.

Imagine starting a collection with a few leaf cuttings! Today my collection stands at over 100 plants. I have very fond memories and I cherish

the times I spent with the loving Grandma O'. Her spirit lives on not only in my heart and mind, but in every African violet of my collection, and especially in her mother's 'Blue Girl.'

AVSA Design

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



*Loretto
Chapel
Candace Baldwin*

How to Eliminate Thrips - Part 1

By Sandra Skalski

Step 1: Disbud your entire collection

When I say disbud, I mean every blossom and bud, down to the teeniest bud. You will continue to do this every five to seven days for three months. You don't want a couple thrips to be able to restart the problem so starve them of their favorite food and reproductive fuel. The upside is your foliage will grow healthy and strong, as all of the plant's energy will be focused on growing fresh leaves. If there are any plants in your collection that do not appear healthy for any reason, toss them now. Don't risk the spread of a disease for a few plants. If you can't bear to lose them, isolate them from the rest of your collection until you are sure they are healthy. Toss the buds and other plant material into a plastic bag, seal it, and dispose of it immediately.

Step 2: Spray the entire collection thoroughly

When I say the entire collection, I mean every plant. Every. Plant. Don't spray only the plants on one shelf or on one side of the room. You need to spray everything. If you don't you are just wasting your time. Thrips fly and there is no way you can be sure they didn't get over there even if the problem seems to be just over here. I spray my best/favorite plants first, and work on down. If there are plants you find you don't want to spray at the end, toss them. You have now reduced your collection.

Make sure you have a good sprayer on hand. A small, hand-held pump sprayer with a fine mist is ideal. There are several insecticides that are effective against thrips. Here are two that I have used successfully.

Avid - 1/2 teaspoon per gallon

Conserve - 1/2 teaspoon per gallon

Step 3: Put fresh yellow sticky cards on every shelf

You want to use new cards because this is already a hassle and you don't need the additional aggravation of figuring out what speck is new and what speck was already there. Use yellow because thrips are much easier to see against the yellow background - Trust me on this one. Use at least one sticky card per shelf because the more cards, the more chance of catching the thrips. You can also identify where the problem is the worst. I also tape a sticky note besides the card with the number of thrips I noted on that card. Don't trust your memory because you need to know when you stop seeing new adults on the cards.

Step 4: Spray again after about 5 days

You may notice an uptick of adult thrips on the cards after the first spraying. These may be adults the spray missed or happened to be flying when you sprayed. They are flying around, searching for pollen (they should not find any if you disbudded thoroughly). It is important to eliminate adults as quickly as possible so they don't reproduce, so hence, you spray again.

Step 5: Spray a third time about 7 to 10 days later

You will now be catching any larvae that recently hatched, and remaining adults. You should be seeing far fewer adults caught on the cards after this spraying.

Step 6: Repot

Repotting will help freshen the plants and remove damaged outer leaves. You will also scrape off the entire top layer of soil (at least an inch or more) so that any pupae may be removed. I discard the scraps from this repotting in a sealed trash bag.

Step 7: Spray a fourth time

This is to catch any recently hatched larvae, nymphs or stray adults. I added an insect growth regulator at this point in my program. I'll talk more about that later. You should stop seeing adults now, so it is important to keep checking those sticky traps and keep disbudding.

Step 8: Lock Down

Lock Down is the last refuge for stubborn infestations. If you are still finding new thrips, despite following all of the above advice, you need to start isolating plants or shelves of plants. I have used domes, baggies and clear Sterlite

containers. You want all of your plants isolated by shelf if possible, with a sticky card in each dome or container. This way, you can figure out if the problem is still widespread or just on a few plants. Trailers can be difficult to clear up because the soil is not as easily scraped off. If you think this may be your problem, take some crowns and restart new plants and discard the remains. Leave a few sticky cards out in the open to catch any stray adults still flying. Remember, adults can live for at least a month or more. Check the sticky cards in each sealed container or domed tray to see where the infestation remains.

(Ed's Note: Look for Part 2 of this Article in the May/June 2017 AVM)



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Experiments on Propagating Chimera and Fantasy African Violets to Bloom True - Is Using Suckers, Blossom Stalks, or Calyces the Best Method?

By Dot McLendon

Sometimes it's difficult to propagate African violets by leaf cuttings. One example is "chimeras," where propagation by leaf cutting rarely produces plantlets that will bloom true to description (identical to the plant from which the leaf was taken). Other very genetically unstable varieties, like the most unusual multicolor or fantasy-blossomed varieties can also prove difficult to propagate "true" by leaf cutting. A Chimera AV is one that is a "pin-wheel"-type blossomed variety of African Violet, which frequently doesn't propagate "true" (like the mother plant).

One alternative is to propagate by suckers. Another is to propagate by blossom stems. One big question is whether either of these methods best produces plants that bloom true. Over the last year or so, I experimented to determine which of these methods worked better to produce Av's that bloom true. That procedure is discussed below.

1. Suckers

- a. **A sucker is a side-shoot growing from the main stalk of an AV, which will propagate "true" most of the time.**
- b. Allow natural-occurring suckers to develop
- c. One of the best ways since nature does all the work for you
- d. Let it develop on the chimera until it begins to push the leaves of the mother plant out of position - before it permanently distorts the plant
 - a. Use a tool designed for this purpose to remove it from the mother plant and plant in soil; water, and place under a dome to encourage root growth

- b. **See Figure 3 on Page 2** for a diagram of how suckers are formed on blossom stalks from Chimera or Fantasy African Violets. Pot these suckers up and wait for the plants to bloom to see if they are, indeed, blooming true to the original mother plant.

2. By Blossom Stalk Propagation

- a. Blossom stalk propagation takes the longest to see the results.
- b. I believe this to be the best method of propagating, although the success rate for stalk survival is somewhat lower than for leaf cuttings. It takes about one year to produce a blooming plant. And for success, you have to find a plant that has good-sized bracts (calyces). **A bract/calyx is what's left on the blossom stalk when the flower petals are removed (See Figure 2 on next page).** Plants with red reverse leaves usually do not have large enough bracts and lack sufficient chlorophyll in the bract to sustain it through the lengthy process. Also, use only a blossom stalk with freshly opened blossoms. There is also a theory that if the flower buds are removed, the bracts will grow larger, which may or may not be true.
- c. Cut the blossom from the stalk and cut the stalk about 1 1/4" below the bracts (calyces) **(See Figure 1 on next page.)** Cut the end in a 45-degree angle similar to a leaf (similar to the cut on a leaf that you intend to try to root) and plant 4 or 5 stalks in a pot (with drain holes) filled with a 50/50 mixture of perlite and vermiculite. The blossom stalks

- are then domed and watered with an eye dropper as needed. Plantlets should form in the axil of each bract. Some may begin to produce babies as early as six to eight weeks, and some may sit for months doing nothing.
- d. When the plantlets are large enough to work with, remove them from the blossom stalk and root or plant as you would a sucker.

Figure 1: Blossom stalks ready to plant.



Figure 2: Calyxes/calyces ready to plant.



Figure 3: Diagram showing stalk of African Violet, showing how to cut the blossom stalk before planting to produce true-blooming Chimera and/or Fantasy Blossoms. Also shows where the "suckers" will be produced to get new plants to produce true Fantasy blooms.

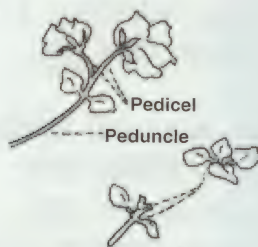


Figure 4: Plantlets grown from blossom stalks of Chimera and Fantasy AV's, ready to pot into separate pots.



3. Conclusions:

1. After all the blossom stalk plantlets and suckers matured and bloomed, the plantlet results and sucker results were as shown below. (The whole process took place over the period of about 1 year!)

i. The blooms from the blossom stalks bloomed true (Chimeras and Fantasy AV's). Below are photos of the Fantasy plant, Calico Queen, and the Chimera, Yukako:

ii. Calico Queen:

Figure 5: Bloom from Fantasy AV, Calico Queen, at the beginning of the experiments, and also the blossom resulting from the plantlets propagated with blossom stalks.



iii. Yukako:

Figure 6: Bloom from Chimera AV "Yukako" mother plant at the beginning of the experiments, and blossom resulting from propagation by using blossom stalk.



FINAL CONCLUSION: Therefore, my final conclusion is that the best method for propagating Chimera AV's and Fantasy AV's to bloom true, is using suckers, and/or blossom stalks/Calyces. Proof is in the experiments that I used over the last year or so... It takes longer this way but in the end produces the most "true" blooms.

2017 AVSA Convention Awards Orlando, FL Convention

By Linda Hall

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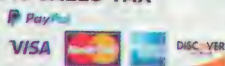
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Senk's Fruit Fly

Exhibited by: Mary Corondan

Miniature Trailer

Hybridized by: R. Follett and D. Senk

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Winston J. Goretsky, President

32 Scimitar Point N.W. • Calgary, Alberta T3L 2B2 Canada

Email: Winston@Goretsky.ca

Hello everyone!

I find it difficult to believe that this will be my last message as President of AVSA. The past few years have gone by very quickly and at the close of the National Convention in Orlando Florida, I will join the ranks of the Past Presidents, who have served this office before me.



It truly has been an honor to serve AVSA in this capacity and although my term is concluding, my involvement will not end, but rather be focused in other areas where I can continue to serve.

As I write this message, I'm traveling at 39,000 feet in a 787-9 Dreamliner from Calgary to Shanghai, where I will join others on a Gesneriad Society trip for a 3 week botanical expedition, in search of new and undiscovered gesneriads. Last year I was able to meet an enthusiastic botanist, Fan Zhi-Wei, who attended a convention in Delaware. He is working to introduce and popularize the African Violet in China at the Guizhou Botanical Garden in Guiyang. I hope to visit this site and meet with him to observe the progress that has been made and to encourage these efforts on behalf of AVSA. I am truly amazed at what is happening around the world with our beloved African violet. We sometimes tend to focus on our local efforts and activities and forget that AVSA is an international organization with members all over the world.

For many people, gathering at convention is the only time throughout the year that we are able to see each other and make new friends with other attendees. It's a great opportunity to meet the hybridizers of your favorite plants and maybe cross off a few wish list items from the Sales Room. Putting a face to a name really helps personalize your communications with people, especially when you read an article or participate in a social media posting. It brings it all to life. The best part is that we have a whole week of getting to learn new and exciting things from being involved as exhibitors, judges, clerks, speakers, vendors, customers, board or committee members, show workers and more. It's the participation that attracts our attention. We all want to get involved with even a little part of the action.

Perhaps you are a new member and looking for ways to get involved. There are always different

things available to be done and they are waiting for you to speak up and say you're willing to help.

You might be a seasoned member with lots of experience in growing plants and may have won many prizes as an exhibitor. Imagine how being a mentor to a new member could help them out. It's a great way to pass along your knowledge and wisdom. Look for ways to share your ideas, tips, tricks, and techniques which have taken you many trials and errors to learn. Pass along this knowledge to others, rather than squandering the information and you'll see how appreciative others will be to learn from you.

Writing a short article for your club newsletter can be as easy as summarizing what you may have learned from a recent workshop. Try to organize the information into easy-to-follow steps and add a few illustrations or photos. It doesn't have to get too technical or complicated to be useful. It's actually quite fun to do, once you put your mind to it and before you know, you'll want to repeat your effort with a new topic.

Try writing these types of articles for the magazine. There are many first time members who very easily benefit from the basic information that we take for granted.

Nobody wants to be part of a club where they feel isolated. Let's work together to be inclusive, rather than exclusive. We generate the type of excitement and enthusiasm that we give off. If you want to have the type of organization that is vibrant and thriving, then we have to project that image and activity level to others, so that they are excited to join and get involved.

Sometimes, it does take considerable effort to change our circumstances, but as I'm sure you already know, nothing good comes without a bit of hard work.

Let's try and be the type of people who get involved, work hard and share the attraction of our great hobby with others, so that they are able to receive as much enjoyment from it as we do. Just remember, don't give up when things seem too hard, always try to persevere.

A stylized handwritten signature of Winston J. Goretsky.

Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

You will find many Article Contest Entries in this issue of the AVM. Above, and to the left of the title, you will see Contest Entry. **To be eligible to enter the Article Contest, the author must be a CURRENT MEMBER of AVSA.** I again want to thank Pat Hancock for her idea of the AVSA Article Contest, which has provided us with such wonderful articles for this publication.

Also, to those of you who spent time writing for the Contest, please continue writing for the AVM after the Contest is over. I have heard nothing but positive comments about the article submissions.

Read Pat Hancock's article about the 2018 Article Contest on page 14 in this issue. Yes, you have another year to see that fine article you were intending to write someday, in print, and perhaps making you the winner of the 2018 Article Contest!

I've been hearing lately about African violets being sold on a **Popular Internet Bidding Site** for ridiculously outrageous prices. I've also been told that there have been plants sold online that are infected with INSV. I suggested that in both of



these situations, our members should contact the vendor.

In the March/April AVM I misspelled the last names of two of our writers, and want to correct that here:

(page 48) Propagating Chimeras: A great use for AV Necks, was written by **Linda Sumski**.

(page 52) Grandma O's African Violet, was written by **Bart Wasilenko**.

Think about writing your best article, and submitting it to the 2018 AVSA Article Contest!

I've been asked several times if I have a favorite African violet. I do, my favorite is 'Humako Inches.' The blossoms are huge, each petal white on the outside edges, and the center of each petal is a deep purple that fades into the white. The blossoms can grow quite large. It's one of those plants that make you look like a better grower than you really are. On page 52 you will find a fun article by Pat Hancock; *"Three Great Shows in Seven Months. What Fun!"*

See you in Orlando!

Ruth

Hi Everyone,

Are you ready to have some fun in the sun and take in the beautiful African violet show in Orlando? I can't believe our convention is almost upon us. It will be good to be finished with all the cold and snow that we have all had.

This year AVSA will not have a dais at any of the banquets. We will just have a podium with microphone in front of the banquet room. Everyone can sit with their friends throughout the room. The President and presenters will sit at one of the front tables at each banquet and go to the podium when needed. The presenter

or President, whoever is presiding at the banquet, will announce your name, which state you are from and ask you to stand and remain standing until all are introduced.

We need to know if you will be attending the Friday luncheon so the President and the rest of our AVSA members can acknowledge and thank you for your dedication to AVSA.

Looking forward from hearing from you.

Cindi Nofziger
Seating

African Violet Pests, Diseases and Cultural Problems

By Ben Haning

Avoiding pests and diseases:

- Purchase plants from reputable sellers.
- Quarantine new purchases for a while to watch for signs of diseases or pests.
- Remove buds and blossoms before bringing plants back from a show.

Spider mites:

- Mites attack the center of the crown. Affected leaves will be small, distorted and will turn gray like ashes. Discard affected plants or spray with Avid (abamectin 2%) at 0.625cc per quart of water once a week for three weeks.

Thrips:

- Thrips are sucking insects that can damage leaves and blossoms. Thrips often eat pollen from the blossoms and will cause spilled pollen on blossoms. They can be seen with the naked eye as tiny, tan insects crawling on blossoms. To eliminate or suppress thrips, remove all blossoms and buds before spraying for thrips. Spray all leaf surfaces every 7 days with Avid and Conserve (spinosad 11.6%) at 0.625cc of each per quart of water.
- Azamax (azadirachtin 1.2%) at 12ml per quart of water is also helpful to eliminate thrips.
- Azamax is an antifeedant that keeps thrips larvae from feeding. Overture 35WP is also used for thrips.

Soil Mealybugs:

- These are small, white, fuzzy, sucking insects that attack the roots of African violets. They can be seen on roots and under pots if grown on capillary matting. They also leave white "webs" on the inside of pots. Mealybugs will stunt the growth of plants, and if in large numbers they can be seen growing at the intersection of the soil and base of the plant.

- Treatment and prevention is accomplished by treatment with Marathon granules (imidacloprid 1%) at a rate of 1/8th TSP per 2 to 3 inch pot and 1/4 TSP per 4 inch pot. Marathon should be reapplied to soil media every 2 to 3 months. Sprinkle the granules on the soil surface and water into the potting media.

Botrytis Blight:

- Botrytis Blight shows up as gray fuzzy fungal growths on surfaces of blossoms and bugs.
- Blossoms may also turn mushy and gray. High humidity and cool temperatures favor infection with the fungus. Treat with fungicide control.

Powdery Mildew:

- This fungus appears as a white dusting on leaves and blossoms. It is more common when humidity is high and the days are warm and the nights are cold. Treatment and prevention is accomplished with Spectracide Immunox Multipurpose Fungicide (1.55% Myclobutanil) at a rate of 7.5cc per quart of water. One treatment lasts 4 to 6 months.

Crown Rot:

- This fungal disease causes stunted growth and eventually wilting of the plant. It seems to happen often when the plants potting mix becomes too dry and then too wet. It can be treated by cutting off the crown and removing all the diseased tissue, and spraying with fungicide. Repot the salvaged crown and keep it bagged until it grows new roots.

Petiole Rot:

- This is not a disease, but rather a cultural problem. When fertilizer salts accumulate on the rim of the pot it will cause the petiole of the African violet leaf to rot where it touches the accumulation of fertilizer salts. Frequent repotting

with fresh potting mix every 3 to 6 months will prevent fertilizer accumulation. Another preventative treatment is to periodically leach the potting mix with water.

Orange Crust:

- This is also a cultural problem rather than a disease. Orange crusts will accumulate on the plants leaves. Damage to the youngest leaves

will cause them to be stunted and distorted. It can be prevented by using less fertilizer, avoiding mat watering on young plants and by frequent leaching of plants to wash away build up of fertilizer salts.

Ed's Note: Award-winning Texas grower, Ben Haning, shared a handout of this information at the Texas Lone Star State Convention.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Primulina USBRG 98-083

Exhibited by: Janice Davidson

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Stanley Ko – Shatin, NT, Hong Kong

'Ko's Amazing Skywatch' (10873) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single chimera light blue sticktite ruffled star/white stripe, variable blue fantasy. **Variegated** medium green, white and cream, plain. **Standard**

'Ko's Blessed Senectitude' (10874) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single-semidouble chimera blue frilled star/white stripe. Medium green, heart-shaped, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'Ko's Delectation' (10875) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Semidouble-double chimera white frilled star/mauve stripe. Medium green, plain, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'Ko's Hotsy Totsy' (10876) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single chimera lavender sticktite ruffled star/white stripe, blue fantasy. **Variegated** medium green, white and cream, plain, glossy. **Standard**

'Ko's Like Yesterday' (10877) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single chimera burgundy sticktite frilled pansy/white stripe, green ruffled edge. **Variegated** medium green and cream, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'Ko's Love Affair' (10878) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single-semidouble chimera white frilled star/pink stripe, white edge. **Variegated** medium green and white, pointed, serrated. **Standard**

'Ko's Mermaid's Kiss' (10879) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Semidouble pink pansy/dark pink fantasy, green ruffled edge. Dark green, quilted, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'Ko's Petite Amie' (10880) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single-semidouble light blue pansy/ purple band, thin white edge. Medium green, serrated. **Semiminiature**



'Ko's Spectacular' (10881) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single tiny blue petals. Dark green, pointed, thick leaves/red back. **Miniature**

'Ko's Sweet Love' (10882) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Semidouble chimera blue-purple frilled pansy/white stripe, green edge. Medium green, quilted. **Semi-miniature**

'Ko's Tapestry' (10883) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Single chimera pink wasp/blue stripe, dark blue fantasy. Medium green, bustle-back, serrated. **Small standard**

'Ko's Twilight Angel' (10884) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Double chimera white frilled star/light pink stripe, pink fantasy. Medium green, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'Ko's Twilight Beauty' (10885) 01/20/2017 (S. Ko) Semidouble-double chimera dark pink frilled pansy/white stripe. Medium green, plain, quilted. **Standard**

Shu-Hua Fu – Taipei, Taiwan

'Milk in Wonderland' (10886) 01/20/2017 (S. Fu) Semidouble dark lavender pansy/blue fantasy. **Chimera variegated** medium green and white, quilted. **Semiminiature trailer**

REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following has been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

'Jersey Girl Trail' (10374) Change blossom type from pansy to star.



2017 VACATION GUIDE

These AVSA commercial members would be happy to have you visit them when you are in their area. They are listed here by state. Please carefully note the contact information, hours, and if visits are by appointment only. Enjoy the education and inspiration that visiting these businesses will afford you!

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Contest Entry

Mites & Humidity

By Helen Williams

Mites require a humidity level of 50% in order to live. I accidentally found a neat way to get rid of them one year when I discovered mites on some small *Coleus* plants I was growing for the garden. (This does not apply to red spider mites who love dry conditions, but does apply to broad mites, and possibly cyclamen mites. No guarantees.) Anyway – I put those coleus into a tray, and covered it with a clear dome and put the whole mess out onto the enclosed front porch. No way was it staying in the house with mites!

Long story short, of course it was horribly neglected and never watered over the next weeks, so

when I finally got around to checking on them, the soil was dried out, the plants were a bit wilted, but still alive, as the dome was acting as a life support system. The mites were dead. No sign of mites at all on any of the plants, which perked up after being watered, and were just fine for all their ordeal. Now this may or may not work on a violet, but it sure is worth trying if you have a plant you desperately want to save and have no other remedy. The plant will have to be allowed to get very dry, and to stay that way under a dome so the air around it is quite dry. Remember they need 50% humidity to breed, and even to survive. Take that away and they can't live.

How to Eliminate Thrips: Part 2 “The New Weapons”

By Sandra Skalski

In addition to the familiar pesticides, there are several other weapons you can use to fight this battle. If you live in an area where temperatures rarely go below freezing, you may be especially interested in these extra layers of offense or defense.

I added an indoor bug zapper to my plant room. It has really helped eliminate the fungus gnats. I am not sure if it attracts and zaps thrips, but it can't hurt, right? The downside is they run about \$40 for a unit on Amazon. They also make a loud noise when an insect hits the coils. The good news is that sooner or later you will run out of flying insects and zaps.

I put up No-Pest Strips in my plant room. These are insecticide strips that give off a vapor that kills flying insects. I have also used these in the battle against fungus gnats and they seem to help. The downside is, you really shouldn't use them in a living area. My plant room is only inhabited when I work on my plants, so I can get away with hanging a couple of these when I spot a problem.

Insect Growth regulators are a newer weapon against the insect world. They are now a primary line of defense against household pests like roaches, fleas, bedbugs, and carpet beetles. There are two main types; juvenile hormone mimics and chitin synthesis inhibitors. The juvenile hormone mimics are like a fountain of youth for bugs. They don't kill adult insects, but they interrupt the development of non-adults from one stage to the next and may make adults infertile. A larvae will not become a pupa and a pupa will not become an adult. Chitin synthesis inhibitors prevent the insects from forming their outer shell, causing them to die after molting. These compounds tend to be very expensive.

I did some research and discovered that these compounds are recommended for thrips. Will they

harm African violets? I used a juvenile hormone mimic containing pyriproxyfen (Nylar) at the rate of 2 teaspoons per gallon. I tried this on a few plants and did not see any harmful effects. The fourth and final time I sprayed, I mixed the growth regulator with the Avid.

Unlike insecticides, insect growth regulators can remain effective for months, making them particularly ideal with dealing with insects with high rates of reproduction, like fleas. However, this is also the downside and the reason why insect growth regulators use is limited to the home or a greenhouse. They are not selective and could have devastating effects on beneficial insects and pollinators. DO NOT use them outdoors.

Predatory mites are the carnivorous cousins of the pest mites that plague our plants. They can be purchased and are usually applied by sprinkling mite-infested sawdust around the base of plants. They love to eat thrips larvae. I have never intentionally used these critters but I suspect that those with whom I trade or from who I have purchased plants has, since I have found them on my plants. The downside is when there are no thrips larvae, they still need protein. Pollen is usually their next favorite food, so you will sometimes find them in the pollen sacks. An inexpensive microscope will tell you they are mites and not thrips larvae.

Some Final Thoughts

I'd like to share some frank ideas about what I have noticed over the past few years at African violet shows and how we may reduce the risk of spreading thrips at shows. I don't think I've seen a show schedule that does not say 'Only clean, healthy plants will be accepted'. Yet, I see plants with obvious thrips infestations at prestigious shows. Some of them are so obvious (pollen raining down from dozens of blossoms) that I have to

shake my head. My own club inspects incoming show plants carefully, with a lighted magnifying glass. I inspect my own plants this way all year long, especially at show time. I've frequently heard about passing committees being told that they can look at plants, but not with a magnifying glass. So, you can look, but not TOO closely? This makes no sense. In addition, if somebody brings a box of plants to our local show and one has thrips, the rest of the plants go home as well. The other plants are almost certainly infested, even if the thrips are not visible. There are reasonable exceptions. Plants grown in another area of the home may not be infested. At the very least, all the other plants will receive extra scrutiny. Thrips running around a blossom DID NOT land on the plant as it went from the car to the show room. Those are larvae; they don't fly and they hatched on that plant. Adult thrips will hop or jump when disturbed – their way of flying.

Perhaps this attitude stems from the belief that thrips can be controlled, but not eliminated. In a way, I can understand this. Eliminating thrips takes a lot of hard work. I estimate that I spent 30-40 hours of my time getting rid of this recent problem. It wasn't fun, but I got the job done. If you truly believe that you can't eliminate the problem in your collection, why not leave your plants at home rather than risk infesting a fellow grower's collection with resistant thrips that they may have a hard time eliminating?

Many people have decided to never bring plants home from a show. They sell them or give them away. That's a workable solution for some people. However, I have plants that have taken many months to grow to a large size. I also have 'good' strains of some desirable plants that I would be reluctant to let go. It would also mean I bring closer to 4 or 5 plants to a show, rather than 40 or 50. If we want to continue the sad trend toward ever smaller shows, this is certainly the way to achieve that goal. And what does that say about our society if we are so distrustful of our fellow growers that we have to abandon plants to protect the rest of our collection?

We will never totally eliminate the risk of pests and diseases from showing plants, but we can mitigate the risk by being more diligent in screening entries. Be sure your club educates growers on avoiding and eliminating pests and diseases. Stress the importance of isolating new plants before they come into your collection. The Passing and Classification committees have some of the most important jobs in our shows. Be sure they are familiar with the signs of thrips and other pests and diseases. Give them the tools to do the job, like a lighted magnifying glass, and give them the right to inspect each plant and eliminate any and all plants that are not clean and healthy. The purpose of our shows is to educate the public. Let's set a good example and do our part to keep our violet collections healthy.

Coming Events

May 5-7 - PENNSYLVANIA

AVS of Springfield, PA
Annual Judged Show/Sale
Springfield Mall
1250 Baltimore Pike
Springfield, PA 19064
Sales: 5/5 - Noon - 9 PM
5/6 - 10 AM - 9 PM
5/7 - 11 AM - 4 PM
Exhibit: 5/6 - 1PM - 9PM
5/7 - 11 AM - 4 PM
Linda Kilby (215-704-2952)

mzlinda97@yahoo.com

Barbara Jones (610-407-0541)
bjviolets@aol.com

May 6 & 7 - NEW YORK African Violet and Gesneriad Society of WNY

Judged Show and Sale
Saturday May 6, Noon - 6 PM
Sunday May 7, 10am - 4PM
Galleria Mall, Walden Avenue,
Cheektowaga, NY

May 13 - NEW JERSEY

African Violet Club of
Burlington County
Annual Show and Sale
Medford Leas
1 Medford Leas Way
Medford, New Jersey 08055
Saturday, May 13, 2017
12 noon till 5:00 PM
Info: Susan Arnao
searnao@aol.com

Question Box

By Bill Price

Email: billprice@telus.net

Here are the answers to some great questions that many new growers ask! I am going to take this opportunity to discuss **transplanting** in more detail.

Regarding the transplanting of our violets, while most experienced growers develop their own preferred strategies/-formulas with some variation, I will describe what I believe are fairly standard recommendations.

What I describe applies to all violet types, standard, semi-miniature, miniature, trailers, and species. I will comment as to their different requirements where relevant.

Most hobby growers acquire their new plants as 'starters;' young plants grown in small pots such as Solo cups or perhaps 2 1/2" or 3" pots. Once settled into their new home (and, of course, after being quarantined), I would suggest you gently 'unpot' the plant, (*hold the plant in place with your fingers while turning the pot upside down so that the root ball slides out*) to assess the root development. When you see several roots growing around the outer surface of the rootball, it is time to transplant this plant to a larger pot ("up-potting").

If the plant is left too long in the small pot, you will see the roots matted on the outer surface of the rootball ("root bound") - before transplanting, make several 1/4" deep, vertical cuts into the rootball - this will facilitate new roots developing sooner into the new mix.

It is advisable to select a pot that is no more than 1" larger in diameter and to use a technique called '*mold potting*,' where the previous smaller pot is held inside the newer pot while fresh mix is filled into the space between the old and new pot. Once the mix is in place, the old pot is carefully removed, leaving a 'mold' into which the plant is gently placed, watered in, and replaced in the growing area.

It is important to water the newly transplanted



plants sparingly at first, as at this time, they are more vulnerable to root rot from being too wet. As their roots grow into the new mix, you will see evidence of new growth.

As the plant grows, this technique of up-potting needs to be repeated until it gets to the size that best suits the particular plant variety, or that the grower prefers. For example, most standard plants ultimately will need at least a 4" pot as they reach maturity. For reasons of space, or just preference, many growers decide to keep them at this level. However, for those wishing to maximize their plant's potential such as for shows, up potting to 5", 6", or even 7" pots may be necessary.

Once your plant is in the maximum-sized pot that you have decided upon, further transplanting takes a slightly different turn. When the next transplanting is due, for example, when the plant has developed a 'neck' of exposed stem above the surface of the mix, the grower has a couple of options. One is to restart the plant from leaves or crown cuttings and the other is down potting into the same sized pot.

First, estimate the length of exposed neck, and gently scrape off the old, scaly surface of the exposed stem. (this facilitates new root development from the stem surface after repotting). Then carefully unpot the plant and also remove several rows of lower leaves.

Now, here comes the fun part! As the plant is being repotted into its former pot, you must remove (slice off) some of the bottom mix so that the plant will fit back into its pot without any neck showing. So, for example, if there is say 1" of neck exposed, you will need to slice about 1" off the bottom of the mix. (I would also advise making several vertical cuts in the rootball surface as described above, before replacing it in the pot) Then, when the plant is replaced into the pot, it will be sitting 1" lower. Now, you fill up the pot

with fresh mix around the neck, so that when done, there is no exposed neck.

And again as after all transplanting, keep an eye on the plant and water sparingly until new growth is evident.

Now, for miniature and semi-miniature plants. All the principles of transplanting apply with the following provisos/variations. These plants are customarily grown in pots no larger than 2 1/4 - 2 1/2". This means that most varieties are potted in their 'final' pot size right from the start or very soon thereafter. Consequently, down-potting, or restarting from leaf or crown cuttings is used more.

Trailers are another story! Container size, and size of the particular trailer variety are up to the grower (and for shows, are judged on form, rather than symmetry). Trailers, of course, must be potted as single plants, except at the early stages, transplanting trailers can be very challenging.

With their different growth styles, such as long internodes (and viney) or shorter internodes (and more compact habit), growers have several options when considering transplanting .

When grown in the Japanese style, with the longer stems growing on the mix surface, 'transplanting' or refreshing the mix of larger plants, may mean very gently removing some of the old mix from the sides or bottom of the (usually) shallow pot or pan, and carefully replacing it with fresh

mix. Younger plants may be up-potted using the mold pot technique as described above.

When dealing with transplanting more upright growing vining types, that tend to 'fall open' as they grow, some growers elect to pot them more deeply in a larger pot, filling in the pot with fresh mix. This may appear erroneously as if several plants are in the pot when it is in fact only one.

Transplanting the more compact growing trailers is best accomplished also by mold potting. This is a good time as well to make sure the crowns are spaced as symmetrically as possible. If some realignment is required after the plant is set into the new pot, I would recommend using narrow wooden shishkabob-type skewers to hold the crowns in position for a couple of weeks, after which they can be removed.

And finally, when considering the species, their transplanting needs are the same as their particular type; for example, standard-growing species as other standards, trailing species as trailers, etc. Keep in mind that species are judged as '*naturally grown or wild plants as found in nature*' which means, that having multiple crowns or a 'neck' is not penalized as it would be with hybrids.

In conclusion, I hope these suggestions will be helpful as you take on the not-so-daunting task of transplanting your violets. Your plants will thrive and you will love the results! Good growing!



Contest Entry

What's in a Name?

By Henry Heard, Jr.

I asked for a price list of African violets from a grower. They listed some species. One was misspelled, *magunesis*. This violet originally was found near the town of Magunga. The scientific ending to denote this is "ensis". The "a" is dropped and "ensis" is added, which results in the correct species name *magungensis*. I was fortunate to go to East Texas State University, study Botany, and have Dr. Evan Paul Roberts as a teacher. He never went to Africa, but colleagues who were there, sent him seeds. He

grew the plants. He saw enough differences between the plants he grew, and the plants that had been named and identified, to name two new species. Both were named after towns and therefore the species name end in "ensis". I realize these are no longer species, but clones or varieties. If shows are to have species judging, then it is important to spell the names correctly, and keep the identity true to the clone or variety. Maybe knowing how some are named will help.

A Message From Our AVSA Article Contest Creator

By Pat Hancock

Greetings to All:

This is the last issue of the AVMs containing entries for our first Article Contest. The feedback that I have received has all been very positive. The five Judges have been hard at work, reading and deciding on our first three winners. They will be announced in Orlando, at the Saturday night banquet.

Ruth and I are so grateful for the fantastic participation that we plan to choose three more "runners-up" to receive a one-year subscription to the African Violet Magazine, to be given to a non-member, and each will also receive a new 'Jitterbug' leaf from me.

Next year's Contest will have the same rules, but all the Hybridizers and Judges will be different, and very exciting.

I am so pleased to have the following new Hybridizers for the **2018 Article Contest**:

Kathy Hajner – K's Violets
Belinda Thibodeaux – Cajun Violets
Linda Lloyd – RC's Violets
Carol Eros – Morgan's Violets
Jeff Jackson – Imp's Violets
Steve Covolo – Steffano's Strels
David Harris – Dave's Sinningias

The Judges for the **New 2018 AVSA Article Contest** are:

Cindi Nofziger Lynn Lombard
Paul Kroll Rene Wilson Linda Engle

So, keep writing those great articles, and plan to attend the Convention in Buffalo, NY, where next year's Winners will be announced!

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Multicolor - \$50-\$99

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Nassau, Bahamas



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Evelyn J. Boyer, Austin, TX
Marilyn Heinrich, East Northport, NY

The Magnificent Obsession

By Jim Oliver

In the January-February 2017 issue there was an article by Claire Ulanoff on how to tell if you have too many African violets. It was an informative and enlightening article. I'm sure that most of us have looked at our collections and wondered from time to time that maybe we have gone a little overboard. Having too many violets may be a minor problem for many of us. There is, however, a much bigger problem that we may need to face. Has growing African violets grown from a mere hobby to being a major obsession? Have those cute Saintpaulias taken over your life? Have you gone gaga over Gesneriads? The line between hobby and obsessive behavior is really rather vague so here I offer some "hints" on how to tell if you have gone over the edge. How many of these symptoms are from my own personal experience, I refuse to say.

You are too hung up on violets if the police have been to your house at least once to see what you are "really" using those grow lights for.

...If you ask your nine year old son when he is getting married so you can have his room as a grow room.

...If you have The Violet Barn on speed dial.

...If you don't understand why your spouse won't let you name your daughter 'Buckeye Town Flirt.'

...if you have petitioned the FBI to put the Western Flower Thrip on the top Ten Most Wanted List.

...if you have the last word of the president's message from the AVSA magazine tattooed on your arm (note: If you don't understand this one, you are not obsessed.)

...If you have tried more than once to order Physan 20™ with your prescription card.

...If you can't decide whether to go to your son's college graduation or the monthly African Violet Club meeting.

...If the electric company has asked you to only turn on the plant stands at night when the power grid is not so overworked.

...if you call Beaumont, Texas, when your AVSA magazine is more than two days late.

If you can answer "yes" to at least three of these indicators, then you may have a problem. But there is good news and bad news. The good news is that this obsession is not physically dangerous to you or to those around you. There has never been any major violence attributed to this problem. There have been reports, however, of a few leaves turning up missing at violet shows when no one was looking. The bad news is that this is a tough obsession to cure. It may take years of therapy. Try to find a counselor that knows the difference between *Sinningia* and *Episcia*, as this will make it easier for them to relate to your problem. If, on the other hand, you decide to live with your "hang up" then you must resist the urge to move to east Africa to be closer to your "babies." Realize that your friends and neighbors will continue to look at you strangely and call you "that violet nut" whenever you come up in conversation.

P.S. If anyone has any other symptoms to add to the list, please send them along to me so I can feel more ensconced in my AV obsession and possibly pass them on to others in the future.





Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

K's Cherry Chip Frosting

Exhibited and Hybridized by: K. Hajner

Standard



Janet Stromborg

Janet Stromborg of Denmark, WI, passed away on January 25, 2017. Janet was a warm and generous person. She was the owner and co-Admin of the online forum, the African Violet Brat Pack for many years. Among Janet's talents was a dedicated and scientific approach to hybridizing new African violets and understanding their genetics.

Janet's grandmother gave her a violet in a paper cup. That soon led to dozens more, as she mastered the art of growing and producing her own new hybrids. Her 'Allegra' line of more than 100 varieties was founded on identifying and stabilizing particular interesting traits. This required extensive research into violet genetics. Her hybrids are now distributed widely. Janet will be missed.

In Memory

Kathleen Dickman

Kathleen Dickman of Edwardsville, Illinois, passed away January 29, 2017. She was a member of Amethyst, Metropolitan St. Louis (MSLAVC), and Missouri Valley (MVAVC) African violet clubs, and the Gateway Gesneriad Society, (GWGS) and councils. Kathy was vice-president for GWGS and MSLAVC. In 2015, Kathy became an Advanced Judge for AVSA.

That same year, she served as hostess, managing the hospitality room in St. Charles, MO for MVAVC. She was a superb designer and excellent grower of African violets. In addition to her love for violets, Kathy was also known for sharing her registered historic home for high noon teas and tours in Edwardsville, Illinois. We will all miss her friendship and beautiful talents.

*Jolly
Moon
Mist*

*Exhibited by:
Anne Nicholas*



Photo Credit: Winston Goresky



*Nautocalyx
pemphidius*

*Exhibited by:
Glenda Williams*

Photo Credit: Winston Goresky

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

There are various organizations, in addition to the AVSA that are devoted to saving and promoting various plants species from the African rainforests. One of these is the African Rainforest Conservancy (ARC).

This organization works with a field partner, the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) to support a network of more than 200 villages in the mountains and coastal regions of Tanzania. The area encompasses over 843,000 acres of forests. The Eastern Arc is a crescent shaped chain of cool, moist, mountains and islands that begin in the very southern tip of Kenya, running down through Tanzania. Scientists have called this the Galapagos of Africa, due to the high concentration of natural plant species that are not found anywhere else, including the wild *Saintpaulia* species.

Unfortunately, these forests are a source of illegal logging. They are being destroyed through fires. Agricultural needs are encroaching on the forests. The African Rainforest Conservancy is dedicated to saving this unique ecosystem.

One of the biggest goals of the ARC is education. Various tabs on this website address the efforts. To date, 50,000 school children have learned about the importance of the environment. By learning environmental stewardship now, students will become tomorrow's conservation leaders. The youngsters plant fruit trees. In turn, they learn about erosion control, climate change, and improving access to clean water. The harvested fruit from the trees provides an additional source of income for the communities, and supplements the diets of the children and their families.

In addition to environmental education, other projects are ongoing. To date, over 1,000 families have increased their income through eco-friendly business. Various sustainable income enterprises include fish ponds, bee keeping, and butterfly farming.

The latter sparked my curiosity. Butterfly farming is not a new enterprise (think Chinese silkworms,) but has seen an upsurge in popularity. Zoos often



have some sort of insect display. Butterfly exhibits have become very popular, especially in the United States. Butterfly releases at weddings and other events are popular. Teachers can order various butterfly hatching experiments from science catalogs.

Essentially, butterflies are kept in large enclosures to breed. Following some different, labor intensive steps, the pupa or Chrysalis are gathered, packaged and shipped to a distributor. The distributor then sorts and repacks the pupa, and sends them on the buyer.

Butterfly farming aside, education is also key for adults. Over 10,000 farmers have been trained in agroforestry. Educational efforts also include sustainability workshops, and the importance of reforestation. Over 15 million trees have been planted. Over 5,000 households have been equipped with fuel efficient stoves, lessening the need for wood as a heating and cooking source.

This is a very informative website. Carter Coleman is the president and founder of the organization as it is known today. It was founded in 1991.

Other sections of this website include Past Events. This is a list of various conservation award winners, including the finders of new species. There is a link to Artists for Africa. This was a fundraising event that took place in New York City in April. It is the main fundraising activity for the ARC.

The Contact Us page had the usual information, and a pitch for an upcoming internship. It seemed the intern would be doing a bit of everything, from fundraising and communications, to assisting in day-to-day operations at the New York City office.

There was a link to a blog page. The blogs were short and very informative. Of course, there was a donation tab, too. The website is set up to take all major credit cards, and all donations are tax deductible.

I almost overlooked this educational website, because the web address is not listed in their advertisement in this magazine. The site can be found at africanrainforest.org

It's a Family Affair

By Martha 'Marty' Landry

It was late in the summer of 1965. I was looking forward to being a High School freshman in the fall. The summer had been relatively uneventful, except for August nineteenth, when a dream came true, and I was able to attend the Beatles concert at the Houston, TX, Coliseum. We lived in SW Louisiana, just a few hours from Houston.

My parents told me not long after the concert that my favorite cousin, Barbara, ("Babs" to all the younger cousins), was going to live with us for her first college semester at the local university, and maybe the whole year.

I was very excited over the news. Babs was so much fun, and had introduced me to new things, such as crocheting and painting with watercolors. (I must admit that in the back of my mind, I was also thinking that she could help me babysit my four little sisters...)

I listened as my parents discussed the fact that it was going to be "close quarters" when Babs moved in. They talked about turning the summer porch into a fifth bedroom. Then, they purchased another twin bed and told me that Babs and I would share my room.

My favorite cousin arrived a couple of weeks before school started in the fall, and with her were many boxes; four of them, filled with African violet plants in various stages of growth. Another contained all her tools, potting mix, fertilizer, etc.

None of us, including my mother, had ever grown an African violet. I had never even heard of them, until Babs came to live with us. Babs showed all of us, including my father, how easy it was to "put a leaf down" and grow healthy, little plants from it! The youngest of the sisters, the four year-old twins, were in charge of the two small watering cans, each that held less than a cup of water. They took their jobs seriously, and were relieved when Babs showed us how to "pot-up" the babies. One of

the twins didn't want to have watering worries any longer, and suggested her new responsibility be singing to all of the plants at bedtime.

We all thought it was an excellent idea, except her twin sister, who asked to either sing with her sister, or she could dance for the plants. (They had been in "Baby Ballet" for almost a month at this time...)

In the first school year with Babs there, both of my parents, and I, learned to love African violets, and we all had a new set of friends Babs introduced us to. They were members of the AV club we had joined. Babs convinced my parents and I to enter the club-sponsored AV show, and we were each rewarded with blue ribbons. Babs also entered, and her large, blossom-covered plant won Second Place in the show with many, many entries.

Babs occasionally spoke about "moving out," but she had fit so perfectly within the family, that we all feared she might actually do it! My parents had the summer porch converted into a bedroom for Babs, and we were so happy that she stayed with us until she graduated from college.

When Babs and her longtime boyfriend, (whom I had introduced her to in her second year of college), decided to marry right after Babs' college graduation, and a week before my high school graduation, my parents offered to host the wedding.

The weather was expected to be perfect, so they decided to have the ceremony in the cool shade of the northern porch area. It was shaded not only by the roof, but the large magnolia and oak trees in the yard. Large ceiling fans turned slowly, keeping the air flowing. There were African violets on stands and narrow tables, and in Babs' bridal bouquet, made by one of her friends in the club.

It was an occasion none of our family and friends will forget.



Applying the Brakes

By Bruce Pearson

In a previous article I tell about coming home from my first African violet show with not one but seventy-six plants. This was a little more than two years ago and yes, I have attended several more shows and a convention, each time adding more plants. As you have probably surmised in the last article and these first two sentences, I am an incurable Gemini.

We now have well over 200 varieties, seventeen lighted plant stands, two windowsills three shelves high, three lighted twenty-foot shelves, a twenty-foot container ready to add more plants, along with a 35 x 96 foot greenhouse in the works, specifically for growing Gesneriads and African violets.

Although we have been in the nursery and garden center business for over fifty years, adding violets to the mix at the present rate needs to be examined, and brakes applied, especially since we want to slow down and retire. Yeah, right!

Hope, possibly...as I did come home with only sixty-six plants from the Kansas City convention. Does that show restraint or what? As you can see, I have certainly enjoyed my short time with violets. Unlike the orchids, bromeliads etc. that I have been used to growing all these years, I can see in just a day or two the changes that go on with the African violets' culture.

Thankfully, I have kept a database of the plants I have acquired, but unfortunately have not kept a diary of all the day to day activity and myriad of changes that have occurred in my short time growing violets.

As a result, I have run into some problems that I was at a loss in solving immediately; changing too many things in too short a time, has resulted in too many possibilities to pinpoint the problem. Altering the soil mixture, adding additives to my fertilizer regime, using several different kinds of LED lights and fluorescent lighting, are just a few of the variables that have taken place in a couple

of months.

Within just a couple of weeks, several of my plants looked as though they had been sprayed with a broad leaf weed killer. Close observation of the affected plants with a hand microscope, did not disclose any insects. I quickly stopped my trace elements and Superthrive that had been added to my fertilizer regime, and stopped adding 'additives' to my repotting mix. In short, I stopped as many changes that I had made going back to basic soil mix and ¼ tsp per gallon of 20-20-20.

It seemed to be not a light problem, as it was on several shelves with different types of lights. I looked and looked for insects as I was now seeing physical damage to the plants. And then, I observed movement within the reservoir of one of the plants, and closer observation revealed several other reservoirs with the culprit. I believe it was a thrips, but unlike those observed on orchids. I looked again for these culprits directly on the plants, but came up again with nothing.

Purchasing both Avid and Conserve, I have now made two applications of each over a one month period, and the problem seems to be disappearing. Thrips? Mites? Or something else? I am still not positive, but I suspect it was mites, as the Avid applications seems to have stopped it in its tracks. I also feel the plants were retaining too much water in their wicked situation.

This could have been corrected much more rapidly had I exercised some restraint and isolated my changes (one at a time) to a few plants over a longer period of time.

To me, African violets, although basically simple in their needs, offer the every grower enough challenge to be exciting. They have certainly shown me that whatever is performed on them shows up almost immediately, unlike orchids and bromeliads that can take years to present themselves. Next to the plants themselves, I think a diary of what goes on should be kept. Labeling

the plant with a date it was repotted or in some way changed is without doubt most helpful.
I have started keeping records with the calen-

dar on my computer. It would be nice to have a separate system, but I will see how this goes.
No one ever said being a Gemini was easy.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Morgan's Angel Band

Exhibited by: Winston J. Goretsky
Hybridized by: C. Eros
Miniature

'LE – Ogni Teatre' Plays a Part

By William Gillis



It was just about a year prior to the writing of this article that we learned the news that our friend, Beverly had received the diagnosis not only that she had cancer, but it was terminal. Bev was a very active person in her retirement as she had been throughout her life. Her family was foremost and her church came a very close second. Sometimes, I think her family may have wondered about the order of those priorities.

In recent years, Bev and I attended the same church congregation and worked together on many projects. Prior to this connection we had been work colleagues for several years. Bev had always been a gregarious and very social person. At the same time, she was a very private person. It came as a great shock to many of us when we learned that she had been dealing with some health issues and now had received the really tough news that her time with us was limited. Bev put forward a very bright and cheery reaction. Her condition grew quickly and steadily worse and the time came when she was to enter palliative care at a very wonderful care center near us.

As I prepared for my first visit to her in palliative care I selfishly wondered what I would say and how we would spend our time together. Not knowing what she was able to eat, I wondered about some gift to bring her other than an edible treat. I decided that one of my many African violets might be a good choice.

Bev knew that my African violet growing hobby was really more of an addiction than a hobby. I knew that while she liked plants, it was her late husband who had the green thumb in their family. Nevertheless, I knew the rooms in the facility had big bright windows with a wide ledge and I thought that a blooming violet might be something to bring some cheer on a journey that was far from bright.

I looked over my myriad of plants and settled on one that I thought would be fine. It was a new plant of the variety *LE Ogni Teatre*. It had large, strong, deep red blossoms held well above gently variegated foliage. The name *Ogni Teatre* translates as "Theater Lights." The LE, which precedes it, refers to the hybridizer. She is Elena Lebetskaja, a Ukrainian hybridizer, who lives in Vinnitsa (Western Ukraine). She started hybridizing African Violets in 2000. My leaf came from Poland and produced several healthy young plants. As I looked over my options of plants to bring *LE Ogni Teatre* was sending me a strong and bright message. It seemed to me the logical choice to bring some light into the drama of life's ending in which Bev and all who knew and loved her were now engaged.

Off I went with 'LE Ogni Teatre.' As I arrived, another couple from our church was about to leave Bev's room. Bev was sitting up, looking and acting her usual bright, cheery self. She saw immediately

the gift that I was holding and she laughed. "You are bringing ME a plant? Bill, you know that I have killed every plant that I have had any close contact with. I guess this is one plant that most likely will outlive me." We laughed nervously but the ice had been broken and that truth which none of us wanted to recognize as being real was before us. I told Bev that this was one of the first blooming plants grown from a leaf that I had imported from Poland several months previously. She was intrigued by that, and by its Ukrainian origins and that the name had to do with theatre. One of Bev's granddaughters became the main caregiver to the violet and it became the focus of many conversations as friends came to see Bev in the final months. As she shared it with other visitors Bev elaborated a bit on the story of our initial conversation about the plant. I know it brought her some

pleasure and it helped relax others who came to say a poignant good-bye to a dear friend. Bev died on May 31st, 2016.

'Le Ogni Teatre' is now with Bev's daughter and daughter-in-law each of whom says they do not have green thumbs. I grow far too many plants and I know well that despite whatever green thumb I may have there are still some of my plants that die way too soon. My tender care seems to do little. How very like human living that is. What a drama is this living, in which we are all engaged. The famed William Shakespeare said it best: *"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players: they have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts, his acts being seven ages."* I am gratified that my 'LE - Ogni Teatre' was a "prop" in this particular staging of the drama of life and death.

Rhapsodie Rebecca

Exhibited by:

Kenneth Rein

Hybridized by:

Holtkamp

Standard



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Why Grow the Species?

By Josh McKinney • Madison, AL

I have grown various *Saintpaulia* species at one time or another and wanted to share my experiences growing them. I will dispense with the formal botanical names for the sake of brevity. Moreover, I would not be surprised if the taxonomists changed them again in a couple of years!



Orbicularis also flowers rather easily and grows well single-crowned. Has beautiful leaves too. Tolerates stronger light than *grandifolia*. The one I grow has the lighter flowers. The darker variant is *purpurea*.

Grandifolia (#237) flowers easily and is quite vigorous. I either provided mine with excessive light (which may bleach the foliage) or too little fertilizer. It has paler leaves than some species, so keep it out of light that is too strong.

House of Amani is believed to be a natural hybrid. It flowers somewhat easily, but the blooms don't have staying power.

Intermedia has small, round, velvety, serrated olive green leaves with nice blue flowers.

Nitidia stays small and grew slowly for me. A feature I appreciated were the shiny leaves.

Rupicola is a trailer which suckers and flowers readily.

Sigi Falls has ovate, thick hairy leaves and grows multiple-crowned. The leaves tend to be

brittle and it grows somewhat slowly. Color of flowers may vary.

Shumensis has single pale blue with a darker eye. The miniature foliage is light green, pebbled, and it usually grows with multiple crowns. It bloomed for me, which at the time, I was unaware of the rarity. I recall starting it from leaf cuttings and had it in a rectangular plastic cake box, lightly covered with plastic cling wrap. For the soil, I believe I used a mixture of peat, composted manure and perlite. For the container, I used half of a seed starting plastic cell-pack (narrow cells which are deeper than they are wide). I grew it under artificial light in a finished basement on the bottom shelf. I allowed it to dry out between waterings. I would conclude it likes organic matter in the soil, prefers to be grown cooler, and does not like to be constantly moist. It is possible my variable watering schedule or the lower basement temperature helped trigger the blooming cycle.

Velutina has dark velvety foliage and bloomed occasionally for me. It is worth growing for the foliage alone.

Tongwensis I grow currently. It flowers beautifully and grows easily as a single crowned plant. As a bonus, it features intriguing red shading on the backs of its leaves which varies with environmental conditions. It is sensitive to light that is too strong, though, so it should grow near the end of the light tube or further from the window if grown in sunlight.

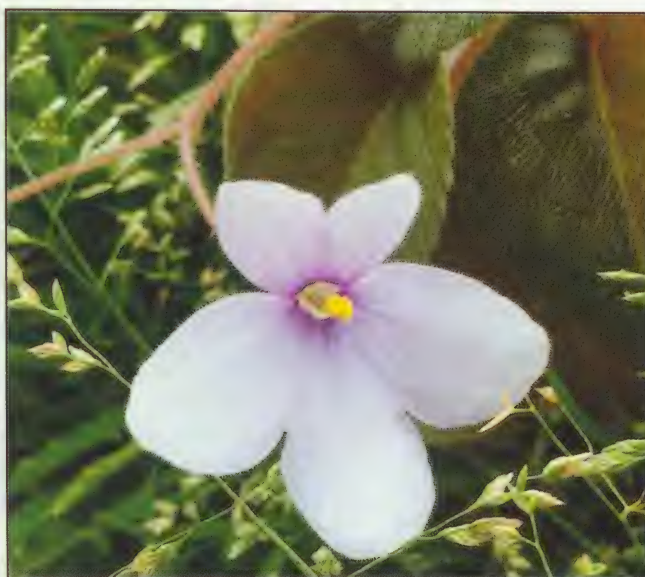


S. Tongwensis



Closeup of Tongwensis leaf

To conclude, consider making some space for a few of the species on your shelves. They are often tougher than many of the hybrids and they have a special wild appeal.



S. Orbicularis

Reference: Clayberg, CD. 1961: Hybridizing with the African Violet Species. -AVM 14:105-107.



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Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Optimara Little Omaha

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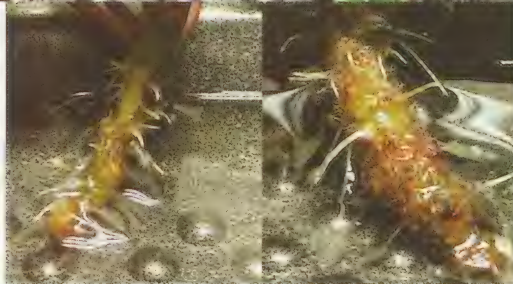
Rooting African Violet Crowns

By Winston J. Goretsky

Occasionally, or even routinely, it is necessary to break apart a larger plant that has become old or out of shape and rejuvenate it to encourage fresh new growth. This is also a good way to start a new plant that you might have purchased or recently received.

Begin by rooting your crown cuttings in a shallow tray of water and cover them with a clear container to maintain humidity. This will allow the crowns to form roots over a short period of time.

Once the crowns have rooted, they are ready to be potted into a container. Starting with a smaller pot size first, this allows the plant to grow into its pot before moving it up into a larger size later. The reason this is important, is that the root mass needs to breathe and will remain much wetter than it needs to be if the pot is initially too large.



This method shows a 2 1/2 inch pot with a wick. Fill the pot half way with your potting mix and then lay the wick around that layer. Fill the pot the remainder of the way and use a tool to create a hole in the middle of the potting mix.

Take the rooted crown and place it into the hole and take care to ensure that it is centered in the middle of the pot. The crown of the plant should be level with the soil. Gently press the soil around the plant to ensure that it is firmly in place.

Place the pot with the newly planted crown in shallow water, to allow the wick and soil to draw up moisture into the potting mix.

To help prevent transplant shock and to encourage good healthy growth, keep the newly potted plants in a container with a clear cover, to maintain humidity, which will help the plant develop its new roots and prevent any potential setbacks.

Once the plant begins to grow, the humidity cover can gradually be removed and the plant can be introduced to your typical growing environment.

Newly potted plants should begin to thrive and show signs of healthy new growth within a few weeks. This method is also good for an old plant that has developed a neck and needs to be restarted.



My Mother: True Lover of African Violets

By Mary Giles, 2017

IN THE BEGINNING

"Would someone please water my African violets?"

With five children of her own, and numerous others from the neighborhood trooping in and out of the house, my hard-working and very busy mother held little hope that any one of us would actually drop what mischief we were creating, pick up the watering can, and provide her poor African violets with aquatic relief.

"How annoying," my siblings and I probably thought to ourselves. "Water your own violets – and what's to eat?"

* * * * *

This essay is a collection of mental snapshots, memories of my mother's love for African violets, and I suppose a bit of my own African violet story, as I cannot think of or remember my mother without her African violets. She loved her violets, all her houseplants in fact, but she found the violets especially rewarding. She never lived without them, from as early as I can remember, to the day of her death.

LET THERE BE LIGHT

After putting her five kids through college, Mother moved across the country into a house flooded with gorgeous light all day long. And her African violet collection thrived, flourished, multiplied, and bloomed prodigiously.

I stopped in my tracks when a beautiful sea of color greeted me on my first visit to Mother's new home – pinks, purples, blues, lavenders and whites; scores of violets, nearly all of them in profuse bloom, perky and happy, and obviously no longer water-deprived or struggling as they did when she had kids underfoot.

And what's this? To my astonishment: multi-colored violets; speckled violets; violets with stripes; some with white edges; variegated leaves;

teacup size violets and grand-daddy size violets. She had tables of violets, hanging violets, baskets of violets, 3-tiered tea caddies bearing tiny pots of tiny violets, and dazzling color everywhere!

After expressing my admiration, Mother determined that I must have beautiful African violets, too. So before driving me to the airport to return to my own home on the East Coast, Mother cut probably 20-some leaf varieties and put them, with a damp cotton ball, in a small plastic bag blown up like a balloon. I was to hand-carry this bag onto the plane and then home.

I threw the bag of leaves in the back seat of her car with my luggage and promptly forgot them. When Mother discovered the abandoned leaves weeks later, on the floor of the back seat, all the leaves had developed air roots and some even bore nascent green leaves.

Of course she potted them up and laughed when she told me about it.

TENDER MERCIES

Mother watered her violets with tender loving care, kept them out of direct sunshine, of course, fed them and gave them quarter turns regularly. If friends had an ailing violet, they brought them to her "AV Hospital" and she'd nurse them back to health. She also played music especially for her violets. When I once suggested we spin a Beethoven symphony on the record player, Mother resisted, gently explaining how her violets seemed to prefer Mozart and Bach.

AS YE SOW, SO SHALL YE REAP

She gave violets to anyone who wanted one – and probably to a few who couldn't have cared less. Many times violets formed the centerpieces at her dinners and parties. For a ladies luncheon, small blooming violets graced every place setting.

In the 1950s and '60s, these she called "party favors." Today we hand out gift bags. Hardly the same in my mind.

And did she ever make a sick call or hospital visit without taking the patient a flowering violet? I don't think so.

As exotic violet hybrids became more and more available later in her life, friends often delighted her with new introductions. These she could not wait to propagate - no doubt to share with others.

WASTE NOT, WANT NOT

She loved propagating her violets, mostly through leaf cutting and division. But she couldn't bear anything going to waste. She'd let suckers grow large enough so she could pluck them from the parent plant and pot them on their own.

She tamed her mature violets by giving them "haircuts." Every viable leaf would make its way into one of her decorative glass containers to root. Those new starts were typically given to anyone who showed an interest. How many African violet collectors did Mother initiate? Fifty? One-hundred-fifty? More? No one can say.

Any leaf accidentally broken from a plant was soon placed in water to root. "Don't worry," she'd say. "It's good for the other plants when they sense a danger like that. It makes them grow fiercer!"

Mother wanted her violets displayed as artfully as she could make them and knew instinctively which violets to pair with which so that not just the colors, but also the shapes and textures of leaves, complimented and contrasted with one another.

For violets that were in spectacular bloom, she wanted beautiful cache pots worthy of her violets' grandeur. Always budget-minded, she found many of her containers at thrift stores - where she knew real treasures could be found for pennies.

She was often able to identify antique Chinese pots from the 19th and early 20th Centuries. "See," she would tell me, turning over a pot, "there's no mark on the underside, and it's not glazed. Probably from the 1800s." A pot might not be marked "CHINA" until after 1891, or "MADE IN CHINA" until perhaps after 1920. But here's the rule to remember, she stressed: "You never know."

Once when visiting Mother's house I came upon a wonderful, unfamiliar work of art: an almost primitive painting of an African violet in full bloom, parked on a table, next to a copper watering can.

"Mother!" I cried, "This painting is fabulous." With my modest museum background, I pronounced it a marvelous example of neo-expressionism. "Look at the emotion! The vivid color! It's wonderful!" The painting was unsigned, but I suspected it might be important.

"Where ever did this come from?" I asked.

"Goodwill," Mother responded.

Yes, the \$2.99 price written in black grease pencil remained on the glass.

"It's inadequately framed," I decided, "and I think it might be valuable. I'll take it to my framer. She's expensive and worth every penny. Don't stop me, I'll pay. And I'll bring it back to you."

The framer, whose work hangs in Manhattan board rooms, Chelsea galleries, and New York City museums, was also duly impressed. After carefully removing the painting from its frame, we found on the verso, in an unmistakably authentic hand:

Denise second grade

I've spun a story in my mind that Denise's mother or grandmother, a favorite aunt, or someone else Denise loved, was another true lover of African violets. Little Denise painted a gift to that person. And if that person should read this essay and want Denise's painting returned, I'm sorry, it's mine now.

THE ROOT OF THE MATTER

Until well into her 90s, when we gave her an iPad, Mother did not have the luxury of the Internet to advance her knowledge of African violet cultivation or its history. I don't know that she ever owned a single book on African violets, although she probably browsed through those found in her sons' and daughters' libraries. She learned through instinct and experience, experimentation, and probably information shared by friends who also grew violets.

So I was more than a little surprised when after she and my husband watched a DVD of Steven

Spielberg's excellent film, *Amistad*, she pointed out a combination of errors in the story about this slave ship and its African mutineers.

John Quincy Adams convinced the United State Supreme Court the West Africans brought to the U. S. on the *Amistad* - as slaves - should be freed. After the successful Supreme Court hearing, Adams brings the leader of the mutiny into his greenhouse and tenderly hands the African a potted African violet. The now free man looks wistfully at the violet, brings it close to his face, breathes in its "fragrance" and appears to be emotionally transported back to his West African homeland.

Problem 1: African violets have no fragrance.

Problem 2: African violets are native to East Africa. This West African guy had never laid eyes on an African violet.

Problem 3: African violets didn't find their way to Europe or the Americas until late in the nineteenth century. The Honorable John Quincy Adams certainly wasn't cultivating them in 1841.

To our amazement, Mother quietly pointed these errors and anachronisms after the film ended. We sat there agog, listening - and believing her.

TO EVERYTHING THERE IS A SEASON

"Sometimes things just die," Mother explained once when a violet mysteriously gave up.

Mother's own near century-long season was ending. Late one spring, medical experts in her own family told us that Mother was unlikely to live through the summer. I flew to her, "for the duration," as I told my siblings, wanting to spend as much time with her as remained.

She continued to live independently, mostly, caring for herself and her violets. Friends and family came from all over the country to see Mother and say their goodbyes, often bringing presents of - what else? African violets. Even her Hospice helpers brought her blooming violets and she adored every one of them.

One newly arrived pair of deep purple violets, which must have come from a good nursery and not a grocery store, boasted particularly large and plump blossom stems. Soon after the pair's delivery I noticed these same peduncles, clipped

of their flowers, standing upright in a small soil-filled plastic applesauce cup.

Me: Mother? What's this?

Mother: An experiment. I never tried propagating with those parts of the plant and I want to see if it works."

ASHES TO ASHES

Inexplicably, just days after Mother's death, those two deep purple violets, the parents of Mother's peduncle experiment, also died. Was the August weather too warm? Did we lose track of their need for water as we devoted all our attention to Mother at the very end? Was it something else?

Months later, when my siblings from the West Coast, and I from the East Coast, reunited in the Midwest to bury Mother's ashes, it was a sentimental journey indeed. Oak Hill Cemetery sits on high ground, a relatively short walk down the gravel road from the family farm where Mother was born. As children, we walked to the little rural cemetery with our mother, and her mother, to play hide-and-seek among the gravestones, rake leaves, pull weeds, and plant bulbs and flowers around family graves.

Immediately after the burial of Mother's ashes, feeling drained and peculiar, I sat in a chair in our hotel room, Googling on Mother's iPad one of her favorite subjects, African violets. And I found that the Cedar Valley African Violet Club was holding an AVSA-sponsored show and sale in a shopping center not terribly far away. Was it coincidental timing? A cosmic coincidence? Or again, something else?

My sister and I drove our rental car through farm fields of autumn gold to attend our very first, very fine, African violet judged show and sale. Silently we walked around the tables, admiring the violets, remembering Mother.

Using lidded wicker baskets shaped like suitcases, found at a Goodwill store in that very same shopping center, we flew to our respective homes, hand carrying: Ian Morozko; Granger's Fantasy Lace; Christening Gown; Blue Eyed Russia; Icy Sunset; Blue Silhouette; Rob's Hot Chocolate; Ruby Lane; and Rebel's Minnesota Haze.

FOREVER AND EVER

In my own home, I keep little photographic portraits of Mother, here and there, surrounded by descendants of her own beloved African violets. Through Mother's example of sharing and tender

loving care, I intend to keep her violets going forever and ever.

Mary Giles lives in Charleston, South Carolina with her handsome husband and roughly 200 African violets.

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Contest Entry

HOW DO YOU KNOW WHEN...

By Clair Ulanoff

...you have too many African violets?

Yes, I know, some of us think "there's no such thing as too many!"

But do you know you have too many when:

You find plants at the back of your shelves you'd forgotten you had?

You find plants at the back of your shelves that long ago went to that great compost heap in the sky – and you didn't notice?

You find those dead plants and realize that you hadn't watered them in a month? No wonder!

You put down leaves when you're in a hurry and don't label them because you think "I'll remember" – and then you wind up with a tray of rooted NoIDs because you have no idea what they are?

All those rooted leaves that "didn't count" as plants have now produced 50 babies?

Your planting supplies have taken over an entire closet/utility room/porch/guest bath?

You're obsessed with scanning online vendor

catalogs, just to "see" what's new?

You place an order for a dozen plants from one of those online vendors and then realize when the plants arrive that you already had them?

You seriously start looking at converting your bedroom into the plant room because you can always sleep on the couch?

Your husband/wife/significant other/partner/friends start speaking to you slowly, in calm voices, just suggesting that maybe this has gone too far?

Your husband/wife/significant other/partner/friends start yelling at you, suggesting that maybe an intervention might be necessary?

Then the plants take it into their own hands...well, leaves...and develop some deadly and contagious plant disease that wipes them all out?

Oh wait...that would mean you could get more plants!

Yes!!!

African Violets and Cats

By Carol J. Schorn

Quite a few of us share our homes with both of those delightful things, cats and African violets. Sometimes the intersection of cats and African violets produces fun things like violets named for cats (*'Rob's Mad Cat'* and *'Bob's Purrty Purple'* come to mind) but sometimes cats and African violets mix less gracefully. With some of those "less graceful" times in mind, here are some of the problems that may arise, along with a few ideas and information to keep the plants and cats safe, and the violet grower sane.

First, never assume that your cat, who should be a carnivore, may not suddenly decide that he or she is at least also partly herbivorous. This tends to happen most when you have just brought in a particularly beautiful new plant, or when you are preparing to take plants to a show, but it may happen at any time. Fortunately for cats, African violets are non-toxic. Unfortunately for the violets, they apparently don't taste bad to cats. For anyone who might like to check on which other plants are safe or not safe for cats, one website with that information is: <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants>

Even if your cat doesn't think your shelves of violets are a salad bar, he or she may succumb to the desire to do physics experiments with them. E.g. "Hmm... how many times do I need to tap this plant pot with my paw to overcome the co-efficient of friction, slide the pot along the shelf, and drop it over the edge, so it goes crash onto the floor?"

Your cat may decide to vary this experiment by tipping over not just plant pots, but filled reservoirs or temporarily placed containers of other liquids, so that they can study the flow rate as the liquid pours onto the floor. The cat can then also study the absorptive quality of the carpet, or the way a non-carpeted floor channels the spilled liquid.

Then there is walking with a box or tray of plants at the same time that your cat decides that he or she MUST, at that moment, dart between

your legs. The cat can then watch both the human and the plants hit the ground.

Your cat may become a danger to your violets even inadvertently: if the cat is indoor/outdoor, he or she may bring in plant pests or diseases in their fur.

And although, as mentioned above, African violets aren't poisonous, they may still be a source of danger to a cat. Even cats who aren't interested in tasting the violets may decide to sample other things associated with them.

A few years ago, my new kitten had been home only days when I was top-watering a shelf of violets late one evening, using a baster and a cup of fertilizer water. Reaching up and facing away to reach the plants farthest from me, I suddenly realized that the "lap-lap-lap" of a cat drinking something was way too close - her water bowl was in another room. I glanced down to see the kitten's nose buried in the cup of fertilizer water, which she had jumped up to reach. And of course, this was late at night, so I couldn't just call my vet and see if this counted as a poisoning emergency or not. I decided to play it safe, so I made the acquaintance of one of the Veterinary Poison Control centers that night. Luckily for me and the kitten, the vet at the Poison Control Center determined that the dilution of the brand of fertilizer I was using was probably low enough not to be toxic to a healthy young cat. He simply advised me to give her a few spoonfuls of milk to coat her stomach, and then to watch her for a couple of hours.

Of course, when using any sort of pesticide in a house with a cat, exercise great caution and read labels carefully. Even common household products may be dangerous. An example is that Lysol, sometimes used as a spray to treat powdery mildew, is toxic to cats.

An important note: if you suspect your pet has been poisoned, call your vet or a Veterinary Poison Control center BEFORE leaving your house or

doing anything else. You don't want to make a bad situation worse by giving incorrect first aid. And with some toxins, every second counts, and appropriate first aid, directed by a vet and given by you, may save your pet's life or buy enough time for you to reach your vet. If directed to proceed to your vet's office, take the container of the suspected poison with you - the vet will need to see the ingredients and amounts as listed on the label.

If you ever need to reach a Veterinary Poison Control facility after your vet's regular hours, below are two phone numbers. Both are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center at 1-888-426-4435. Their website says that a \$65 fee may be charged to your credit card.

The other center is the Pet Poison Helpline, at 1-855-764-7661. Their \$59 fee, payable by credit card, covers the initial call, and any necessary follow-up calls on that particular case.

One of the simplest and most effective ways to avoid most of the potential "cats and violets" issues is to have a "plant room" where the cat is not allowed to enter. But for some of us, including me, that is just not practical.

Since my cat regards my violets as edibles or toys, I had to learn, years ago, how to keep her out of them. At first, I had little success - I couldn't train her to stay away from them. Repeated "No!" and "Get down!" were ineffective. The double-stick tape which one cat book recommended, as something cats don't like to walk on, had no effect. Putting citrus-scented objects, which cats aren't supposed to like the smell of, on the shelves, also

was no use. I finally decided that a physical barrier would have to be used.

I immediately rejected any sort of opaque barrier, as that would keep me from seeing the plants. Clear plastic, such as a drop cloth, could be shredded by claws, wouldn't stand up to pressure by paws or pounce, and would cut off good air circulation, possibly leading to powdery mildew issues. What finally occurred to me was to use hardware cloth. For anyone not familiar with this, it looks like a magnified, heavier version of the screen mesh used on window or door screens. The size I chose has the "holes" 1/4 inch wide, and comes on a roll two feet wide and five feet long. I have this wire mesh wrapped around each of my violet shelves on the sides accessible to my cat, with "doors" that allow me access, and are tied shut whenever I am not working with my plants. While it's no one's idea of "House Beautiful," it works. The large-size mesh admits light and air, but not kitty claws or teeth. My cat quickly quit trying after she found that she could no longer get at the plants or pots.

Lastly, I've learned that if I need to work on plants off the shelves, such as re-potting, or carry them through the house, the safest method is to put my cat in the bathroom first. Temporary confinement to the bathroom is made more bearable if a favorite treat or toy accompanies the cat into the bathroom.

Sometimes it takes extra forethought or effort, but the rewards of being able to keep our favorite furry plants and furry pets in the same house make it all worthwhile.

*Happy Mother's
Day*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Optimara Ingrid

Exhibited by: Winston J. Goretsky



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Jersey Sugar Plums

Exhibited by: Anne Nicholas

Hybridized by: R. Kurzynski

Semiminiature

Testing WFT for INSV

By Ronn Nadeau and Barbara Jacobs

Photo Credits: Mike Day and Ronn Nadeau

This article is about WFT (Western Flower Thrips, *Frankliniella occidentalis*, herein called thrips) and how to directly analyze thrips larvae for INSV virus by the immunostrip method. Since you are reading this you likely already know that thrips is a major problem on African violets (and about 600 other kinds of plants) and that the problem is much bigger if the thrips carry impatiens necrotic spot virus (INSV).

Not all thrips infestations carry INSV. I have had many encounters with thrips during my 40 years with African violets, including one around a year ago, and all have been INSV(-), knock on wood. However, during 2016 my friend Barbara's plants had a heavy infestation with INSV(+) thrips on practically all of her violets. After talking about it we decided to delay trashing all her plants in order to do some experiments with them. Presence of INSV virus was determined by testing with INSV immunostrips purchased from Agdia, Inc.

A good way to search for thrips is to pull apart some flowers and pollen sacs and look for movement there. If there is movement, there surely are larvae and maybe also some adults. See Photos 1-4 of thrips at both stages. Adult thrips fly, which is obvious because how else would they land on sticky cards as shown in Photo 5? I used to think that thrips flew onto flowers, laid eggs there, and eggs hatched into larvae that developed into adults and so on. But that's not how it happens, as most of you know, and as I have learned in my later years.

Thrips lay eggs by slicing into tiny African violet buds, which form near the central stems which are, near the soil surface. Barbara and I confirmed this using buds of various sizes taken from a violet known to have thrips. In Photo 6, Barbara is dissecting the buds and looking for moving thrips larvae. In a bud just starting to crack open, she saw and captured tiny larvae by coaxing and shaking them onto black paper. Larger buds also produced

larvae, but smaller ones did not. The smaller buds likely contained eggs.

Having collected six larvae, we put them in a bag/buffer provided in Agdia's immunostrip kit and ground it vigorously, then completed the test. The result showed a red line, indicating an INSV(+) result. We then tested a piece of leaf from the same plant that had given us the six larvae, and got another positive result, and the red line intensity was equal to the intensity we got from analysis of just the six larvae.

We think there are big advantages to testing thrips directly, as compared to testing leaf pieces, especially when thrips are discovered early during an infestation. It takes a couple of weeks for symptoms to show up in leaves. The fate of a collection of African violets infected with thrips depends on the extent of the infestation and on whether or not the thrips are INSV(+). This method would probably save money by requiring fewer analyses before getting a confident answer.

If you can find and isolate thrips larvae and want to know if they contain the virus, by all means directly analyze them. We think it can be assumed that INSV(+) *adult* thrips would also test positive with the Agdia method. We found it impossible to reliably scrape adult INSV(+) thrips from a sticky card for their direct analysis. We wish there was a way to nondestructively capture adult thrips for immunostrip analyses. We wish that we had analyzed whole flowers that contained INSV(+) thrips, but we did not. We will not be able to do those things until another opportunity, an INSV(+) thrips infestation, presents itself. We encourage others who might follow up on this work to notify us and publish their results.

Photos and videos of thrips for these experiments were shot by R. Nadeau with a Mustcam digital microscope purchased on

Amazon. Magnifications vary from photo to photo. Links to the videos are available at NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com. You might find it

amusing to watch thrips running around under the microscope's eye. Send comments to Ronn at avseeds@yahoo.com.



Photo 1. A WFT larva on black paper.



Photo 2. An adult WFT on black cloth.



Photo 3. An adult WFT. Females are sometimes brown.



Photo 4. A larva on a pollen sac. Can you spot it? Check out the video version.



Photo 5. An INSV(+) African violet. See the thrips stuck on the sticky card?



Photo 6. Barbara dissecting buds

Effective April 1, 2017, Jeri Anderson is the new AVSA Affiliate Chair. She can be reached here:

twajda1@comcast.net
1640 N. Kelly Place
Tucson, AZ 85715

Jeri will be in charge of the Affiliates Breakfast at Convention. Come and meet her, if you don't know her already.

I have enjoyed my time as AVSA Affiliate Chair and feel confident that Jeri Anerson will successfully carry on the work of the Affilate committee.

Mel Grice



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Moon Child

Exhibited by: Jean Melnechuk

Hybridized by: P. Sorano

Standard

*Buckeye
'New Dawn'*

Exhibited by:
Linda Rowe



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



'Everdina'

Debbie McGinnis

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

African Violets - The Power to Heal, and Steal, your Heart

By Wayne Tomczyk

Often, people find our club website and contact us because of their interest in our Tucson African Violet Society club. Based on the area which these people live they are usually assigned a mentor to answer their questions, to inform them, and to make them comfortable with attending our club and meetings. But, when a call came from an 80 year old man who was assigned my wife as a mentor, she was soon to find out that his interest had little to do with our club.

It seems that he had quite recently become a widower and his grief was new, strong, and obvious in his demeanor. He was not yet ready to venture out into our club. It seems that one of his wife's passions had been a small collection of African violets that she had owned and cared for many years. He had never taken an interest in her violets, but when she passed away, he decided it was important to try to keep her violets alive. He strongly stressed that he did not want to join the club, he just wanted some information to help him keep her violets alive, as some of them were in serious trouble and would soon die. My wife had him come to our home and asked him to bring some of the violets with him. He showed up with his violets. Their names were unknown, and three of them were in very poor condition. My wife showed

him her plants and gave him step-by-step instructions on how to care for his plants. They repotted plants and set down leaves from the three which were probably not going to survive. The man took extensive notes, thanked her for her help and went home with assurances he could call her anytime.

A few months passed, and the man, once again, called my wife. It seems that he had gotten a dog which had somehow knocked over two of his plants and he wasn't sure what to do with them. This time my wife went over to his home, taking two babies that she had also started from his wife's original plants, as well as one of the Optimara "Ever Grace" plants for him. He was now a much more talkative and assured man, as he has been able to heal from some of his grief. It was obvious to my wife that he has enjoyed growing his wife's African violets, and he has developed a real interest in continuing to grow them.

The African violets have helped him heal from his loss. Now, they seem to be giving him the enjoyment of growing them, and begun to "steal" his heart. Who knows, he may be ready to join our African violet club somewhere in the future. It is truly amazing how much African violets have to offer us, if we just allow them to be part of our lives!



The Trouble with Tribbles

By Claire Ulanoff

Many years ago in Space, the Final Frontier, Captain James T. Kirk discovered a furry little creature called a "tribble". The tribble was cuddly and warm and soft and made purring noises and the crew all fell in love with it. The trouble was, there was no such thing as one tribble and before long there were tribbles in the ceilings, in the food, in the living quarters, in the air ducts - they were everywhere.

Can you see where I'm going with this?

When I moved to Nashville and started growing African violets on a modest scale, I had about 6 plants that sat in my kitchen on a shelf below a fluorescent fixture. They were pretty and healthy and bloomed nicely and I fell in love with them all over again, after not having grown any violets for several years. One day at the office when things were slow, I googled "African violets" and found several hits for wonderful online sellers, some I remembered from years earlier and some that were new. I had nothing to do at the moment so I impulsively ordered half a dozen starter plants. Unfortunately that meant that my little area in the kitchen wasn't

going to be big enough for 12 plants so I decided that an inexpensive 2' fluorescent table top stand would be big enough and I ordered one.

It wasn't.

The inexpensive table top model begat a second more expensive table top model. They both weren't big enough. They begat one compact 24" 4 shelf plant stand and I was sure that would be big enough.

It wasn't.

At the moment I have three compact 24" 4 shelf plant stands lining one wall of my second bedroom, I have the two original cheap table top models sitting on the vanity top in the second bedroom, a very nice two shelf 24" stand sitting on a ledge in my kitchen and 3-4 plants sitting on my mantel under natural and incandescent light.

I'm living with tribbles. They look like African violets but they're really soft, warm, furry, purring little tricksters that make you think oh, there's surely room for just one more...

Sound familiar?



**Visit the AVSA'S Website:
www.avsa.org**

A Family Portrait

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH

Email: <melsgrice@earthlink.net

Alsobia 'Cygnet'

Alsobia (al SO bee a) 'Cygnet' is one of my favorite gesneriads. *Alsobia* is a genus of flowering plants in the family Gesneriaceae, native to Mexico, Guatemala, and Costa Rica. *Episcia* and *Alsobia* are closely related genera. At one point, the *Alsobia* group was considered to be part of the genus *Episcia*. The two genera share a stoloniferous habit, in that rapidly-growing stems are produced, at the tip of which, is a plantlet. These plantlets root readily, and in nature can result in a large mat of plants, each of which may have originated from a single plant. However, the two genera are sufficiently different that most botanists have accepted their separation into separate genera.



plant which produces large, white frilled flowers with tiny purple dots. It can be a very vigorous specimen, producing many strawberry-like stolons with small plantlets along the stolon's length, each of which can be separately rooted. If the stolons are pinched off, multiple crowns will be produced from the base of the plant. It can be grown as either a hanging basket, with

some of the stolons allowed to grow over the side of the pot, or as a standard pot plant with stolons allowed to grow only to the first plantlet. Many growers like to plant a number of crowns in a flat pot (a bulb pan), and keep the stolons well under control. The stolons root easily as you would the crown of an African violet. The stems are somewhat woody, so I use a little dab of Clonex® rooting hormone on the tip of the crown to insure rooting success. The result can be a bushy and floriferous plant.



Alsobia 'Cygnet' was registered in 1967 by R.E. Lee of Cornell University. It was a cross of *A. dianthiflora* x *A. punctata*. It is an easy-to-grow



Alsobias have fibrous, shallow roots, and are in effect, what I call "ground cover." They seem to perform best in a medium that is both reasonably well-drained, and somewhat moisture retentive. I use my standard AV mix of half Pro-Mix HP and half perlite.

Alsobias are more forgiving than Episcias, and

can do well with less humid air and cooler temperatures than Episcias. They are low-light plants, since they come from the rainforest floor. However, extra light will encourage them to bloom more. Margaret Gaibiselis exhibited the attractive specimen of Alsobia 'Cygnet' that you see in the photos at this year's Philadelphia Flower Show.



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F. Eleanor Mattaliano

Judy Walton

Joan K. Wilson

Virginia Barthelmy

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Judith Hess

Carol Semrau

Harry J. Delmar, II

Susan Hanna



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Heritage Frolic
Exhibited by: Maureen Trachuk



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

SK-Fenix

Exhibited by: Donna Turner

African Violets as Office Plants

By Minal Patel

I have been growing African violets for the past ten years. It all started with a purple violet from Walmart, as may be the case with many new violet growers. Over the years I have moved and worked in different locations. Each time, some of my violets have stayed back with my boss and co-workers for them to enjoy! My other violets have moved with me to my new workplace.



African violets as office plants don't require much maintenance except regular grooming, fertilizer, and maybe rotating plants to adjust for the light. Most modern offices also have comfortable temperatures for humans, which works great for violets too. Of course, if you have varying drastic

I feel violets are the best plants to grow in the workplace-office environment, not only do they flower year round, but also take up less space. One of the most important reasons is that they can purify the air and create a greener-cleaner environment. Blooming violets can surely put a smile on your face, especially in a stressful working environment. These are some of my violets on my desk, which had a southern facing window.

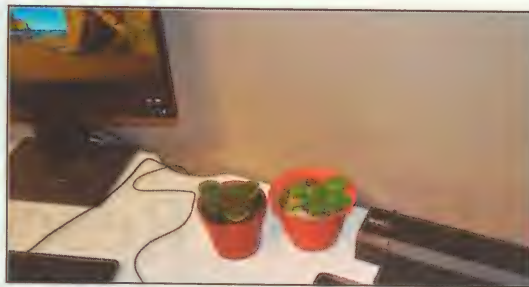
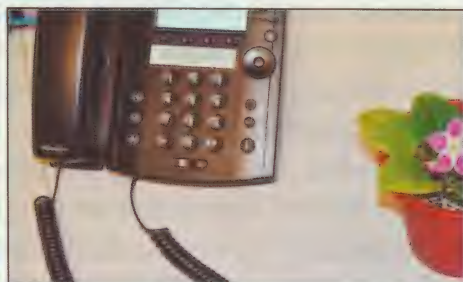
temperatures in the office, then violets may not do too well there.



Offices also have large windows streaming in natural light; if it's filtered, then it can be just right for violets. I believe natural light is the best light for violets, so if you have a window (high or low) and it allows for light to filter in onto your desk, the top of an unused filing cabinet or a nearby windowsill, go ahead and place a violet there and see how it goes. Some examples are in these pictures above and below:



Even in artificial office lights, violets can grow, maybe slightly slower, but they can still survive and produce blooms. Artificial cubicle task lighting can work really well for African violets. As seen in these pictures below:



Just recently, I have started to share my violets with numerous reception desks at my doctors, dentist, children's school, YMCA, karate/gym classes, and similar other locations. When violets are in the office environment, it definitely will make the area more pleasing and even act as a conversation starter with your co-workers. You will be helping to promote violets as an office plant, garner more interest in their cultivation and maybe even form a small office AV club. Of course, nowadays with more and more people working from home, violets can be adapted to a home office, too. So please, if you have the space and the opportunity, take an African violet with you to work today, and if you can, share them with your colleagues!

Happy Father's Day

How to Rescue a Dying Violet

It happens all the time. One of your violets that is hidden somewhere in your collection has almost dried up, wilted, or has some other malady. And, it always seems to be one of the important plants you REALLY need to have. I always tell my violet friends that I'm an expert in reviving a plant from near-death! Well, after many years of experience because I do fail to see some poor neglected plant on my stands, this is what to do when that happens.

First, determine whether the plant is really worth the effort. If it's a chimera or another rare or vintage violet, then it is justified to do all of this work. If the violet has just been ignored and is almost dead from lack of water, I immediately isolate the plant, mist it and the soil, and then place it in a bag and seal it. Why not just pour a lot of water onto the soil? Because a sudden surge of water can shock the plant and cause root rot or crown rot.

A day later, still keeping the plant in the bag, I give the soil a little water, wait a few hours and then repeat until the soil is totally moist, and I then reseal the bag. After two days or more, the plant should come back to life. If not, then we need to take more drastic action.

If the plant does NOT come back to life, and it's NOT a chimera, start putting down leaves. The



Snapping the Crown off the Plant.

leaves most likely will be limp, so I suggest that you cut the stem as you would before planting them, lay them in a tray of water for a few hours or so to see if they stiffen up. If the plant is important, put a



few leaves down in different pots, preferably small ones like a Solo® cup so that they are not "competing" with one another in the same pot. You have a better chance for success even though you might lose one or two leaves.

The above precautions of using separate cups for the new leaves also isolates this particular leaf from the rest of the other leaves as crown rot fungi could hit one of the remaining leaves.

When this near-death experience malady happens to a violet, it stresses the plant, and for some reason it attracts mealy bugs, usually foliar mealybugs. What I do when I see this, is to use the cotton tip method dipped in alcohol, and it INSTANTLY kills them. Just a touch and they're gone. When you use this method, there is NO WAY that the mealy bugs can "adapt" to the alcohol or be resistant, unlike using Imidacloprid. This is always my first line of defense.

To check for crown rot, move away some of the soil to almost an inch below the surface and scratch away the bark of the crown. If it's still



Planted crown.

green, then you're ok. If not, then pull it out of the soil, and use a X-Acto® knife or scalpel and slice away pieces. If there's still rot, clean the knife with alcohol, and do another slice until there is no rot at all. Don't contaminate the healthy part of the crown or you'll lose the plant.

If possible, it is preferable to break off the crown of the rotted part (see photo) as this will root faster than using a knife. I really don't know the reason for this, but it does seem to work better.

I would like to thank Carolee Carter for her tech-

nical help and proofing this article.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.



Moisturizers for African Violets

By Margaret Taylor

From *The African Violet*, News Magazine
of the African Violet Association of Australia

Throughout our hot summers we are regularly told to keep up our fluid intake in order to avoid heat exhaustion. African violets likewise, will dry out and wilt very quickly if they are not regularly hydrated. This does not mean they like to be kept in conditions that are too wet. More is often as bad as less. Try for the happy medium!

When temperatures soar, most times the humidity is raised too. African violets can deal with higher than normal heat if the humidity is also a factor. They may not be happy but they will usually cope until temperatures reduce to a comfortable level.

Occasionally in summer, we encounter some periods when the humidity drops to a very low level. These are the high fire danger days in hot climates. In winter, home environments may also be a low humidity factor in that drier than usual air is created by heaters and air conditioners.

When threatened with very dry heat, our plants will benefit from a fine spray from an atomiser of warm water. This is best done in the middle of the day, not when temperatures are dropping.

Benefits of condensation.

There are some cultural instances when it is important to raise the humidity to a higher level than usual. When an African violet has been repotted, it sometimes happens that it shows its distress with flagging, floppy leaves. The plant can usually be saved by placing it in a clear

container, or closed inflated plastic bag for a few weeks, being careful that excessive condensation is wiped away from inside the container. Potting a crown with no roots or a plant that has had a long neck removed will also benefit from this treatment.

When tiny seedlings have been pricked out in tiny individual containers, they need what might be termed a "humidity crib" to give them a good start. A lidded clear plastic microwave container is useful here. Then the tiny seedlings are usually ready to face the world in about three weeks. Just remove the lid for half a day at a time to allow them to harden off a little before subjecting to strong light.

Some growers like to grow their leaves for propagation in a closed humid environment. Again, less moisture showing in the container is better than more.

Powdery mildew

This may be a problem at a change of season when we see warm days and cooler nights. Good ventilation for part of the day may help, or running a small fan for larger collections should prevent the use of fungicides. Try to keep leaves clean of powdery mildew by gently brushing or wiping with a soft cloth (Away from other plants!) Be vigilant. As with all methods of plant culture it pays to be vigilant and to pay attention to problems as soon as they occur. Happy growing!

Visitors Get a Vote!

By Ronn Nadeau

The Gateway West Gesneriad Society is a club for people with an avid interest in growing plants belonging to the Gesneriad family. Some of us grow several members of that family while others, including myself, specialize in one member, African violets. Our club is highly diverse and almost all members actively participate in our activities, which include monthly meetings, biannual parties, and an annual judged show.

At our annual show, held during Septembers at the Missouri Botanical Garden, visitors look at plants, buy plants, and visit our Question/Answer table. At our 2016 show we added something new, a chance for visitors to be the judges of one particular section in the show, Unusual Container. This gave visitors a chance to actively participate in the show and encouraged dialogue between club members and the public. The regular judges did not judge that section.

Planning for our "Visitors Vote" feature started around nine months before the show with a membership vote that approved the idea. We announced that all club members could participate by placing an entry in the 'Unusual Container' Section, and there would be a \$25 award for the member whose entry got the most visitor votes. Club members could not vote, only the visiting public.

Other aspects of the "Visitor Vote" contest were as follows. Each visitor who voted received a free pre-bloom African violet seedling in a 2.5 inch pot, plus a 3.5 inch pot and some soilless mix in which to later transplant their seedling. Each voter also got a note explaining the contest and how to take care of the plant and how to obtain a free packet of seeds from me.

The Visitor Vote competition went very well. The Unusual Container section had twelve entries, more than any other section in the show. Sixty-three visitors, including some young ones attending with their parents, carefully examined the entries before voting. Sue Melson won the vote with her entry titled "Precious Red."

So far I have given away fourteen packets of seeds to people who e-mailed me pictures of their blooming plants, and many expressed satisfaction with the experience of bringing their plant to bloom. Club members have expressed that we should have a similar Visitors Vote at our show this September, and we will. It was fun and a success in every way!

Message to Unusual Container Voters

As a hybridizer of African violets and producer of African violet seeds, I generate a lot of plants for evaluation as new varieties. My limited growing space means that I cannot grow as many of my candidate new varieties as I would like. So I am asking for your help to grow out some plants.

If you participate in this project as described below, I will send you a free packet of African violet seeds and instructions on how to grow them.

I am giving you one of my plants plus what you need to grow it to maturity, plus a pot and some soilless mix for when the plant is large enough to transplant. It will grow best under fluorescent light, 10 hours per day, or in window light but not direct sunlight. When watering use water containing 1/4 teaspoon of granular fertilizer per gallon. Miracle Gro blossom booster fertilizer (15-30-15) or similar works well.

When the plant reaches "adulthood" and blooms in a couple of months or so, please send me an email that includes the number on the pot and pictures of the whole plant and closeups of the flowers. Also include your mailing address so I can send you a free packet of African violet seeds.

Thank you and happy growing.

Ronn: avseeds@yahoo.com

My website: NadeausAfricanVioletSeeds.com

Photo 1. Note given to each voter



Photo 2. The Unusual Container display table



Photo 3. Mike Day and Marion Hamtil enjoying the entries



Photo 4. The Voters Choice: 'Precious Red'



Photo 5. Congrats to Sue Melson with winning entry

Three Great Shows in Seven Months What Fun!

By Pat Hancock • Photos by Mel Grice and Winston J. Goretsky

Mel Grice and I clocked a lot of miles this past year - to Albuquerque, Mansfield, and Plano, Texas. We saw lots of beautiful plants and shared late nights with great violet friends. I suggested to Mel that it would be fun to share all the beautiful "winners" in the next issue of *The Violet Connection*. Mel's picture file is unending, and very professional. It was my feeling that all those who were unable to attend would love to see the pictures.

Pictures are always worth a thousand words!

May in Albuquerque - Bill Price won Best In Show with *S. 5c2 clone diplotricha* 'Parker.'

Kurt Jablonski won Second Best African violet with '*Buckeye Nostalgia*' and Mary Corondan won Third Best African violet with '*Rob's Inner Orbit*.' Best new cultivar - Commercial went to Kathy Hajner for '*K's Salsarita*.' Kathy is a new hybridizer and commercial member.



S. 5c2 clone diplotricha 'Parker'



'*Buckeye Nostalgia*'

On to Mansfield in September, and a beautiful show in the newly redecorated Kingwood Center. Best in Show was '*Buckeye Seductress*' shown by Kurt Jablonski. Second Best was '*Rob's Combustible Pigeon*' shown by Debbie McInnis. Third Best was *S. shumenis Mather EE* shown by Beverley Williams. Best chimera was '*Ma's Blue Spinner*' shown by Marge Farrand.



Kurt with '*Buckeye Seductress*'



'*Rob's Combustible Pigeon*'



S. shumenis Mather EE



'Ma's Blue Spinner'

Next, we were invited to attend the Lone Star AV Council convention and we were off to Plano, Texas, the first week of November. Two days travel by van each way. We were joined in Texas by Paul Kroll, as we arrived late on Wednesday evening. This show was great fun and we met a lot of new "Texas violet lovers."

Friday evening was outstanding with a DJ, karaoke, and pizza. Bill Foster was dancing, and the music was great.

I believe the entries were over 500, and Best in Show was *'Carolina Elegant Affair'* shown by Richard Nicholas. Second Best was *'Sassy Shirley'* shown by Ken Muzalewski. Third Best was *'Precious Red'* shown by Anne Nicholas. Best New Introduction was *'Jitterbug #6'* shown by Anne Nicholas - one of my New Introductions. (It will be named for Anne in the future.)

After all this, we are now back at work, playing "catch-up." It was a lot of fun and once again, we were reminded that we have such a great hobby.



'Sassy Shirley'



'Precious Red'



'Carolina Elegant Affair'



'Jitterbug #6'

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

One of the more bizarre things that can happen in genetics is when someone crosses two individuals for a clearly recessive trait such as albinism, and normal colored offspring are produced. How can two recessive individuals produce offspring with the dominant trait? Shouldn't recessive crossed with recessive produce 100% recessive offspring? Yes, that's what is normally expected, but with genetics there may be some other possibilities. A lesson I teach in classes is that it is possible for two blue eyed people to have a "legitimate" brown eyed child. We have rules in genetics, but sometimes life doesn't play by such simple rules.

The answer to this seeming contradiction usually turns out to be that different mutations can result in the same recessive phenotype, but when combined together they effectively complement each other's mistake and restore the trait to full function. In math, a comparable example might be multiplying two negative numbers together and getting a positive number. In genetics, mistakes in different locations can cause a recessive trait like albinism in humans or in animals. However, if individuals with different mutations have offspring, the pigment making pathway can be restored to full function and a normal pigment offspring results. These types of complimentary mutations aren't rare, but they aren't common enough that most people have ever heard of them.

So what does this situation have to do with African violets? This column's questions may give you some insights.

Q: A friend reported crossing two white flowered plants and getting non-white offspring. I thought white flower color was a recessive. Is this possible or did some stray pollen get involved?

A: Stray pollen might be the simplest explanation for how crossing two white flowered plants



resulted in non-white offspring. However, it is unclear if all white flowered plants share the same mutation. If there is more than one mutation for white flowers, a mistake that causes no pigment to be made, crossing two different "whites" together could have completed the pigment making pathway and produced non-white offspring.

I've been doing some inquiries with some of the Facebook groups and haven't run into a firm example of this yet, but I believe it is possible. One plant that comes to my mind is 'Frosted Whisper'. This cultivar is generally thought of as a pure white, yet I have seen light pink flowers on the plant when grown very cool. The ability to produce pigment under different temperature conditions may be an indication that the "white" for this cultivar is different than other whites. 'Frosted Whisper' also has very pale or near white stamens, unlike most other whites. If I were trying to cross two white flowered plants for non-white offspring, 'Frosted Whisper' would seem to be a good parent to use.

Q: I saw a posting on Facebook where a person crossed a pink with a red or mauve flowered plant and some of the offspring were blue. Is that possible? Aren't pink and red recessive traits to blue?

A: This is another case of complimentary mutations and one that my genetic model has predicted for years. The pink coloration is the result of a mutation that fails to put a methyl group on the pigment molecule. Red or mauve is a mutation that fails to put a second methyl group on the pigment molecule. The genetic trait for the enzymes that add the methyl groups are actually two separate genetic traits. Both traits must be present to get both enzymes and the double methyl groups characteristic of blue pigment flowers.

The recessive trait that produces pink can actually have a working copy of the second enzyme,

but with the first enzyme not working, the second enzyme isn't expressed. When such a pink is crossed with a red or mauve colored plant, the offspring can inherit a working 2nd enzyme from the pink parent and a working first enzyme from the red parent. The offspring now has working enzymes in both locations, both methyl groups are added and blue flowers are produced.

I've been looking for a good documentation of this pink X red = blue cross for some time. I'm grateful to the hybridizer for sharing their data on Facebook allowing us to see such an interesting cross.

Q: Can crossing two pinks together result in something other than pink offspring?

A: There are two ways I can think of for pink X pink to give non-pink offspring. First, pink generally is a genetic recessive so one usually expects it to breed true. However, the examples of complimentary mutations given in the previous questions could be an explanation. If there is more than one mutation for pink, crossing pinks of different genetic types together could restore the pigment production system and produce non-pink offspring.

A second explanation is, are you sure both par-

ents are actually "pink"? During the days when I extracted and identified flower pigments, I came across a situation where 'Precious Pink', a very successful show plant of the time turned out not to be "pink" at all. When analyzed, the plant pigments were actually red or mauve. The pigmentation was so pale, however that many people saw the color as "pink". I recall many reports of people using 'Precious Pink' in hybridizing and were disappointed that they didn't get pink offspring. Without a chemical analysis, it is easy to confuse a very pale red (mauve) for "pink".

Q: I've recently seen some pictures of some Russian hybrids that have very highly frilled or ruffled petal edges. Any idea of how this trait is inherited?

A: Generally speaking traits that cause extra growth of cells on the edges of petals or leaves are a dominant genetic trait. There may be a dose factor involved too. One copy of the gene gives a certain amount of frill or ruffles. A second copy of the gene may increase the effect. If this is correct, in order to get offspring with the high amount of frills, both parents would have to carry the trait so you can get a chance at offspring with the double dose.

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THE REAL CULTURE OF VIOLETS

By Sandi Mynatt

You may think I am going to expound on the various methods of growing these marvelous plants...but I am not. I had a strange experience one night when I dozed off to sleep on the sofa in the violet room.

I thought I heard very, very faint conversations coming from the direction of the violet shelves. I suspected that I was just dreaming, but the sounds persisted and soon I was straining to hear them more clearly and discern the words. As unbelievable as it may sound...the violets were conversing with each other! It appears they have developed a unique culture among themselves. Imagine that! A society of violets! It was truly amazing! I have not noticed this phenomenon in the daytime. Perhaps they only converse when they think no one is around. I will try and recount the fascinating conversations for you. Many different voices chimed in, I could not identify them but at least seven discernable ones were heard.

"Psst...psst...hey girls, is anybody awake?"

"Hello, I'm here, just shaking some of the dust off my leaves, how are you tonight?"

"Oh a little thirsty. I wish she'd hurry up and water again. This is the third time in a row she's let me get dry before doling out a few drops of water to my parched roots. You'd think she'd learn."

"I don't think she's very smart, even though she is a human. But we're stuck with her, I guess, so make the best of it"

"I'm scared of her...she cuts my leaves off with those sharp pincers....eeeeek"

"I'm getting sunburned on one side, can anybody trade places with me for a few days?"

"Yeah, I'll swap with you. I keep reaching up for more light but it's pretty dark over here at the end of the shelf."

"Oooh, what do you think that nasty stuff was

in the water last time she drowned us in it?"

"I don't know, but I've been burping up fishy smells all week."

"....."

"What did she say?"

"I don't know. I can never understand her...I think she's Russian"

"Well I don't care what she is, I don't like her."

"Why?"

"She thinks she's so special because her blooms have those gaudy stripes. Tacky, I'd say"

"I think they're different and interesting"

"You would think so...you're just as stuck up as she is"

"Now girls...be nice to each other, we're all stuck here on this same shelf for a long time and need to get along."

"Well as long as she keeps getting more attention, I'm just not going to bloom."

"But you'll look so much prettier with a halo of blossoms..."

"I don't care. "

"Well sulk and droop those leaves if you want to, but one of our girls disappeared forever when she did that for about a month."

"Just sayin' it might not be a good idea to show your temper like that."

"Hey, did you notice the new girl over there?"

"Yes, but she hasn't said a word since she got here. Maybe we should make her feel welcome?"

"YOO HOO...you...over there on the side...are you awake?"

"Yes I am awake."

"You're new here, aren't you?"

"Yes."

"What's your name?"

"You'll just laugh at me if I tell you"

"No we won't, what's your name?"

"Frisly Dilly"

"HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA"

"See! I told you so! I'm not going to talk to any of you."

"Oh come on girl, lighten up. We all have funny names. Mine is 'Raspberry Crisp,' and hers over there is 'Dancing Fool'."

"Oh, and mine is the best one of all...'Rob's Combustible Pigeon.' What is a pigeon?"

"Ha, it's one of those nasty flying things that zoom in and pluck leaves off of you when you're not looking!"

"EEK...that will give me nightmares for sure! Have you ever really seen one?"

"Oh yes...just look over there across the room in that cage. He's big and white and has huge black eyes...and look at that BEAK!"

"I lost one whole side of my leaves to his nasty bites one day. The human came in just in time to keep him from finishing me off!"

"She yelled at him, but he's still over there looking at me hungrily."

"Is anybody cold?"

"Yes, we all are. I wish it was warmer in here."

"Snuggle up next to me darlin' and I'll keep you warm."

"Oh no...you'll just want to swap pollen again like last time. No thanks!"

"Well your sister didn't mind that so much a few months ago..."

"Yeah, and did you see all those seed pods that swelled up on her stems? Good grief, they were huge!"

"Well that's what I'm supposed to do, you know"

"You nasty old Petal Pusher...keep your distance from me. I don't want any seed pods messing up my symmetry."

"I heard the human say I was going to a 'SHOW'"

"What's a show?"

"I don't know exactly but it must be something good."

"I saw one girl come back from a SHOW and the human hung a pretty blue ribbon next to her pot. She was insufferably proud for over a month."

"Yes, it was disgusting how other humans came over to see her...oohing and ahhing like she was all that and a bag-of-peat."

"Now, don't be jealous girls. Anything that gets us more attention from the human is a good thing, right?"

"But she's such a drama queen!"

"Well what do you expect, after all she IS a Cajun..."

"SHHHHHHHH, GIRLS! The human is waking up! We don't want her to hear us."

"Oh, she's so dense she'll never even consider that we might have our own culture here. She is so self absorbed..."

"Well we better do the best we can, or she's likely to relocate some of us onto another shelf, then we'll have to make new friends all over again. I heard that the top shelf girls are really snooty and mean to newcomers."

"I think the bottom shelf group is pretty wild and crazy. I can hear their loud parties and rude comments some nights all the way up here."

"I like being in the middle. The light is good, there's a pleasant breeze and all my friends are here."

"OK, so we'll all chat again tomorrow night, right? Same time, same place?"

"Ummm, hum.... have a good day all..."

As you can imagine, I was astounded to be privy to this candid conversation. Perhaps I just dreamed it. But as I watered and groomed them today I found that two of them were out of place. I know for sure I had not put them there. The leggy one was now closer to the window and a slightly sunburned one was in the darker area. Mysterious, for sure. Now all I want to know is which one of these snarky little darlings called me 'self absorbed'.





Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Lovestruck

Exhibited by: Drew Norris

Hybridized by: Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses

Large

...after making underwater displays for my local African violet shows, I have been asked "How do you do that?" So, I thought I'd tell you...

Underwater Arrangements

By Ruth Beck

Member Burbank African Violet Society - 30 years

CONTAINERS

- CLEAR GLASS (not plastic)
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- BUBBLE BOWL

BLOOMS

Choose your violets with some buds, if possible. White or lavender blooms can be spectacular underwater but do not last as long as dark colored ones. So think about how long your arrangement will be displayed when choosing the flowers. (They are the highlight of the arrangement!)

OTHER PLANT MATERIAL

- Ferns (all kinds): rabbit ear, asparagus, boston, maidenhair
- Ivy (small)
- Polka-dot plant
- Begonias
- Gesneriad leaves
- Episcia leaves or stolons
- Iris foliage

Test other plant material you might have that doesn't "weep" (like poinsettia). You can use just about anything that isn't too big or muddies the water. All plant material should be washed thoroughly.

ARRANGEMENT

The same elements and principles that apply in regular arranging apply to underwater, although usually on a smaller scale.

The mechanical considerations are the same too, with the exception being that everything must be securely anchored against floating. Material should never touch the sides or top of the container. But, it is O.K. to have bubbles in the water or clinging to the foliage. In fact, it can enhance your design.

MECHANICS

- Pin holders (frog)
- Floral tape
- Marbles
- Floral clay
- Glass chips
- Floral foam

DESIGN

- Heaven – tallest element (line)
- Man – middle
- Earth – lowest
- Focal point (blooms)

TIPS

- Practice with several colors of silk flowers so you can save your violet blooms for show time
- Make the arrangement simple
- Make sure the mechanics are well hidden
- Measure your container to see how tall your plant material can be
- Clean the outside of your container with a cloth dipped in vinegar to remove the fingerprints

Have fun creating a beautiful arrangement underwater!



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

'Bob Serbin'

Exhibited by: Donna Brining

Hybridized by: J. Brownlie

Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Our AVSA Article Contest

All those entering the Article Contest must be current members of AVSA.

The Winners of the contest will be announced at the 2017 AVSA Convention in Orlando, Florida. It is not necessary to be present to win.

The **3rd Place Winner** will receive a total of **eight** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **2nd Place Winner** will receive a total of **sixteen** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **1st Place Winner** will receive a total of **thirty-two** "New Introduction" leaves from the Commercial Members and Hybridizers taking part.

The **Contest Rules** are as follows:

1. ALL entered articles must be Original Work,

and cannot have been published before.

2. You may write as many articles as you wish, and each entry must be marked, **CONTEST**.

3. **Submissions must be received AFTER March 1, 2016. Cutoff date for entries is April 1, 2017. Articles received after this date will NOT be considered.**

1. Hybridizers, Commercial Members and Judges taking part, are not eligible to receive prizes.

2. The decisions of the Judges will be FINAL.

3. Due to the high cost of shipping leaves internationally, leaves will only be shipped to winners in the US. International members will be required to pick them up at the 2017 Orlando Convention.

For more details, read the full article in the January 2016 AVM, page 14, or on the AVSA Website.

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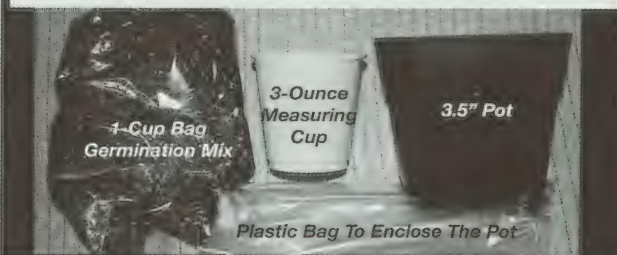
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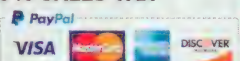
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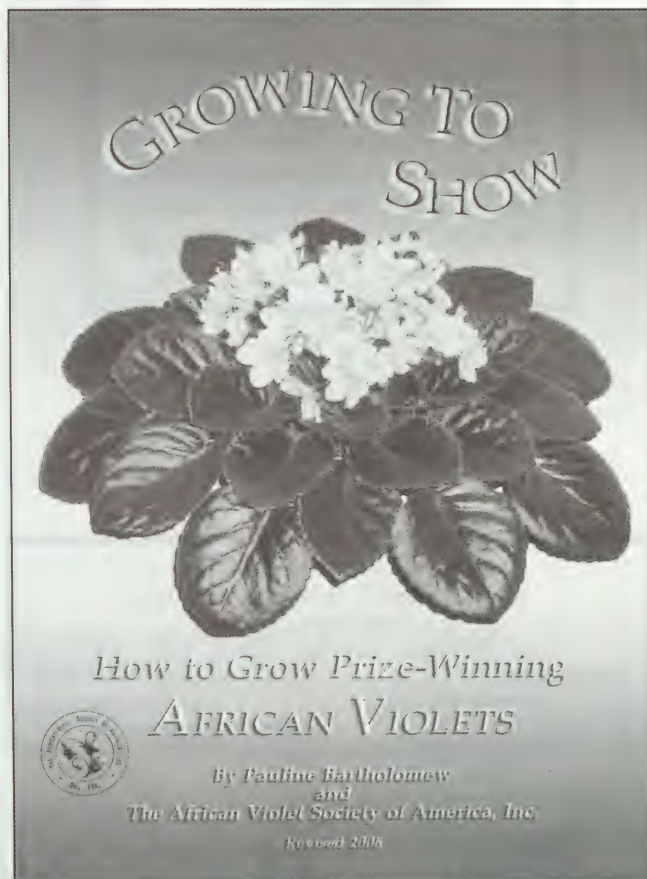
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Volume 70

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JUDGING SCHOOL: To register a judging school, send request to Ruth Loomis, *Email* <ruthloomis@msn.com>. A registration fee of \$15 is required.

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MVL SUPPLEMENTS: Download from AVSA website, or order from AVSA office for \$2.00. Orders in writing only. Send any correction and/or description of new cultivars with hybridizer's name to: Joe Bruns, 1220 Stratford Lane, Hanover Park, IL 50130.

MEMBERSHIP CARDS: Sent to Associate Members. Renewing members receive card on white protective cover of AVM.

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RESEARCH: Send suggested projects for scientific research or names of interested, qualified, potential research personnel to Dr. Jeff Smith, 3014 W. Amherst Rd., Muncie, IN 47304.

SHOW SCHEDULE APPROVER: For information on Shows, AVSA Awards, and Approving Schedules write to: Meredith Hall, P. O. Box 370, Marlin, TX 76661. *Email* <m.hall@reagan.com>. **Do not send Show Schedules by Email - this address is for information ONLY.**

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On this Cover:

Rob's Boolaroo

Exhibited by: Kurt Jablonski

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Richard Nicholas, President

3113 Deerfield Dr. • Denton, TX 76208

Email: randanicho@aol.com

AVSA Friends:

Well, here it is. My first column as your new President. What an honor to serve AVSA and each of our members. Thank you for this opportunity!

I am writing this column shortly after the Orlando Convention and Show. And what a Show it was! Although the number of entries was smaller than anticipated, the quality was outstanding. Winning plants and designs are detailed elsewhere in this magazine, but I do want to congratulate all the winners. Over 300 members registered for the show. All of us who attended owe a big "thank you" to Linda Price, Convention Chair; Thad Scaggs, Show Chair; and Kathy Lahti, AVSA's Convention Director, and all of the many volunteers who worked hard to make a great show.

Special thanks also go to Pat Hancock for her idea of an article contest highlighting new articles for the *African Violet Magazine*. It was a great success and will be continued for another year. Congratulations to Kurt, Sandi, and Sandy, who won the top three awards for this first year.

Speaking of volunteers, here's a big 'welcome' and 'thank you' to the newly elected



officers and directors. Our members and I are privileged to have a top-notch leadership team working for AVSA. That's one of the great things about AVSA. With the exception of Amy and Ruth, our Office Manager and Editor, we are all volunteers - officers, directors, committee members, convention workers - all volunteers. Over the next year I know that there will be many new opportunities to get involved with AVSA, so maybe more members will volunteer!

We have a wonderful hobby, shared with terrific people. When we ask why members come to our shows, we always hear "friends" and "fellowship" as top reasons. To borrow a phrase my wife, Anne, has used as President of the Lone Star African Violet Council, "Violets Connect Us." No matter where we live or what else we do in our day-to-day lives, our interest in, and love for, the African violet brings us all together as friends. What fun!

Your officers have begun a new strategic planning effort to give AVSA clear goals and directions for the next two years under the leadership of Susan Anderson, your 2nd Vice President. I will provide more information in the next issue of this magazine.

Violets Connect Us!



Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

The 2017 AVSA Convention & Show in Orlando, FL, was a tremendous success! The local club, with the guidance of Convention Director, Kathy Lahti, made this convention one of the most memorable in recent history.

I have heard from several members since our return, all with such positive comments. The hotel was perfect for our large group, and the local AVSA members contributed so much time and energy, making sure the Orlando '17 Convention will be talked about for years to come.

I work at the AVSA Sales Table during conventions, and it has always given me an opportunity to meet members of local AVSA clubs. I have spoken on the phone at the office to many members, and finally have the opportunity to actually meet them at convention. I was told this year that a group of three friends said they knew who I was by hearing my accent. What accent?

We have several interesting articles in this issue.



On page 36 you'll find a very interesting article written by an AVSA Member in India, Lalan Pradhu, '*Growing African Violets in Outdoor Shade House in India*'. Mrs. Pradhu shares several interesting photos of her growing areas, and lovely plants. She found African violets through a friend thirty years ago, and shares photos of the many plants she now grows.

On page 43, be sure to read my friend, Neil Lipson's, article, "*How to 'Dial in' the Variegation You Want*." Neil included a chart on "*The Influence of Soil pH on the Availability of Twelve Plant Nutrients*."

Beverly Williams, of Canada, shared an article with us on *Understanding Registered Collection Classes*. This should come in handy for all of the American growers planning to attend and enter their plants at the 2009 AVSA & AVSC Joint Convention next year.

Ruth

My African Violet Rules

From *The African Violet Way* – an E-Newsletter

By Ruth Coulson

- Don't keep African violets in the dark or you won't get flowers.
- Don't keep them very wet or they will rot.
- Don't let them go dry. Wilting is ugly and is unhealthy for the African violet.
- Don't let them be dirty and dusty because dirt is ugly and keeps the light out
- Do understand that the two most important components of potting mix are air and moisture
- Don't try out new fertilizer or potting mix on your whole collection at a time. Be cautious and realize that it can take up to three months for problems to show themselves.
- Do be generous with light and with love, but be a little bit mean with fertilizer. Of course they need some nutrients, but less is often better than more.
- Don't take on a sick plant and believe you will bring it back to health. You may simply get the rest of your collection infested. If you must bring home that orphan to care for, keep it quarantined from the rest of your plants.
- If you have anything new, unusual or precious – DO SHARE. That is the most important way there is to prevent your wonderful new acquisition from eventually being lost.

Office Update

By Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: avsa@earthlink.net

Summer has definitely arrived in Texas and we are back from a great convention in Orlando, FL. This year we had 302 registrants with over 60 first time attendees. The show was beautiful and we had plenty of vendors selling plants and supplies. I would like to thank **Chad Brinkerhuff**, **Donna Oros**, and **Paula Bal** for helping with the registration desk. I would also like to thank **Jim Williams**, **Neil Lipson**, **Carolee Carter**, **Anne** and **Richard Nicholas** and **Diane Miller** for helping when I had to run an errand or two. I really appreciate it!! A big thanks goes to **Candace Baldwin** for not only helping at registration, but she also set up an informational meeting for first time attendees. Candace is always willing to lend a helping hand and for that I am very grateful! A special thanks goes to **Ron Davidson** for always volunteering to help haul all the convention supplies to and from the convention! Also, thank you to the **Convention Chairs** and all the local volunteers that help make the convention such a success.

Kathy Lahti, AVSA Convention Director, made sure we had a great location and did a fantastic job of making sure the convention was enjoyed by everyone.

I would like to invite you all to our Annual Convention and Show next year in Buffalo, NY. The convention will be held May 20-27, 2018, at the Adam's Mark Buffalo Hotel and Event Centre.



Many of you have been receiving our weekly newsletter filled with growing tips and office updates. If you would like to sign up for our weekly newsletter that is sent by email, you can send your request by email to the AVSA office avsa@earthlink.net or click on the sign up button on the home page of our website.

We now have the 2018 AVSA calendar and an updated (May 2016) Judges and Growers Handbook available for sale on the website. The Judges and Growers Handbook is available in print as well as an electronic version. Please visit our AVSA website store for more information. <http://www.avsa.org/store>.

Attention Life members: We offer Life member certificates and membership cards. If you are a Life member and would like either of these or both, please contact the office.

We are now offering a special discount for new life members. The current cost of a life membership is \$1000.00. If you are 50 years of age or older, you can receive a discount of \$250.00, making the cost only \$750.00!

I hope everyone enjoys their summer and plans to attend next year's convention in Buffalo, NY!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Amy".



Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Phisit Chaipradermsak – Chiang Mai, Thailand

'Lip's Diadem' (10887) 03/26/2017 (P. Chaipradermsak) Single pink sticktite pansy/darker eye. Dark green, plain, pointed/red back. **Miniature**

'Lip's Goat Milk' (10888) 03/26/2017 (P. Chaipradermsak) Single white sticktite



ruffled star. Light green, serrated. **Semiminiature**

REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following have been changed at the request of the hybridizer:

'Poetry Man' (10835) Change from **Semiminiature** to **Small standard**.

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS



Thumbprint (Under \$25)



Geneva (\$100-\$499)



Two-Tone (\$25-\$49)



Fantasy (\$500-\$999)



Multicolor (\$50-\$99)



Chimera (Over-\$1000)

Coming Events

September 15 & 16, 2017 - OHIO

The Ohio State African Violet Society
Annual Judged Show and Sale
Kingwood Center Gardens
50 Trimble Rd., Mansfield, OH 44906
Friday, Sept. 15: Sale 9 am-5 pm
Show 1 pm-5 pm
Saturday, Sept. 16: Sale/Show 9 am-4 pm
Free to public (parking \$5)
Contact: melsgrice@earthlink.net or
(937) 654-7014
www.osavs.org

September 16th - TENNESSEE

Memphis African Violet Society
Fall Sale 10 am - 2 pm
Central Christian Church
531 South McLean Blvd
The corner of McLean and Peabody
Email: bakerbethrn@gmail.com
Beth Baker (901) 550-7860
<https://www.facebook.com/memphisavs>

Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

January 1 - February 28, 2017

Janet Riemer • 256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534



Geneva – \$100-\$499

Spring Branch AVC

*In lieu of speaker fee for Anne and
Richard Nicholas*

Chuck Bingham



Multicolor – \$50-\$99

DoDe Whitaker

Baltimore AV & Gesneriad Club

In lieu of speaker fee for Stephanie Griffith

Spring Branch AVC

In lieu of speaker fee for Mary Corondan

Missouri Valley AV Council

In memory of Doris Carson



Two-Tone – \$25-\$49

First Austin AVS

In memory of Doris Looney

Suzanne E. Rasich

First Austin AVS of Denton

*In lieu of speaker fee for Anne and
Richard Nicholas*

Susan Riley

Joan Santino

AVS of Dayton, OH

Dr. Richard Nicholas

Jeanne Damaso

Ron & Janice Davidson

In memory of Martha Turner

Ron & Janice Davidson

In memory of Blanca Fuster



Thumbprint – Under \$25

Annette N. Hershkowitz

Martha Nix

AVS of Philadelphia

*In lieu of judging expenses for Janet Sierzega,
Laurel Brown and Tim Ferguson*

Lillianne T. Ager

Glenda S. Curry

Marion Martin

Rebecca McMeel

Jill Fischer

North Star AV Council

Evelyn J. Boyer

Total this period: \$758.00

AVSA – Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner, Chairman • 12916 Midfield Terrace • St. Louis MO 63146

February 1, 2017 to March 31, 2017 • TOTALS \$500.00



Thumbprint - Under \$25

Sue Hanna

Evelyn Boyer

North Star AV Council/MN

(Ronn) Nadeau AV Seeds

Doreen Hassan

Nancy Blenett

Jo's Violets

Margaret Califano

Glenda Curry

Rebecca McMeel

Sue Mandeville

Frankie Pietzer

Diane Reinke

Carol Hastings

Johnnie Shepard

Liz Dickson

Geneva Stagg

Lynda Vaillancourt

Fred Grafelhann

F. Eleanor Mattaliano

Judy Walton



Two Tone - \$25-\$49

Pamela Schwager

Crosstown AVC/WI

Jan Mittag

Metro St. Louis AV Council/MO



Multi Color - \$50-\$99

AVC of Greater K.C./MO

John Novak

Understanding Registered Collection Classes

By Beverley Williams
Brooklin, Ontario • Revised and updated 2017

Confusion reigns in the collection classes, especially the Canadian collection classes. Hopefully, I will be able to clarify this issue. Local clubs can sponsor other collection classes in their schedules if they wish, however, I am only going to address registered collection classes, specifically African Violets that can be entered in the A.V.S.C. registered classes.

As we are having a joint convention in 2018 in Buffalo, New York, it warrants clarification for those who are not certain.

Shown below are the collection classes as typically seen in most Canadian show schedules. There are four classes, two for the African Violet Society of Canada and two for the African Violet Society of America.

I have not included the A.V.S.A. classes that are specifically for species. You will notice that species are included in the A.V.S.C. Collection classes for standards. A.V.S.C. members who do not have A.V.S.A. membership are allowed to enter a species collection in this class as A.V.S.C. does not sponsor a separate species class.

SECTION I AVSC/AVSA COLLECTION CLASSES

Class 1. One collection per exhibitor per class. A.V.S.C. COLLECTION (Canadian Originations) of three (3) different A.V.S.C. registered standard varieties all the same type (3 single-crown or 3 trailers) or (3) different Saintpaulia species) regardless of type. **A.V.S.A. registrations numbers required. Open only to members of A.V.S.C.**

Class 2. A.V.S.C. COLLECTION (Canadian Originations) of three (3) different A.V.S.C. registered miniature or semiminature varieties all of the same type (3 single-crown miniatures, 3

miniature trailers, 3 single-crown semiminatures, or 3 semiminature trailers). **A.V.S.A. registration numbers required. Open only to members of A.V.S.C.**

Class 3. A.V.S.A. COLLECTION of three (3) different A.V.S.A. registered standard varieties all of the same type (3 single-crown or 3 trailers). **A.V.S.A. registration numbers required. Open only to members of A.V.S.A.**

Class 4. A.V.S.A. COLLECTION of three (3) different A.V.S.A. registered miniature or semiminature varieties all of the same type (3 single-crown miniatures, 3 miniature trailers, 3 single-crown semiminatures, or 3 semiminature trailers). **A.V.S.A. registration numbers required. Open only to members of A.V.S.A.**

The first thing to know is that each exhibitor is only allowed one collection in each class, that means that you as an exhibitor can enter only one group of three plants in each class, but you may enter all four classes with four different collections, which will require 12 individual plants, three for each group.

What does same type mean?

The dictionary defines type as: a class, kind, or group set apart by common characteristics: something distinguishable as a variety.¹

African violets: those that are similar or alike in characteristics; or common form setting them off as a distinguishable class. In this case size, such as single-crown standards and standard trailers. Single-crown semiminatures and semiminature trailers. Single-crown miniatures and miniature trailers. These are all different types of African violets. When a collection is entered all the African

violets must be the same type, all single-crown standards, or all standard trailers for example.

Class 1

This collection, is sponsored by The African Violet Society of Canada; they provide the rosette at the local club show level, and also the National level. At the National level they may also provide any monetary award. If your club is an affiliate member of the African Violet Society of Canada, your Show Chairman can apply for a set of rosettes for a small charge, once a calendar year. It is customary to have a class for standard varieties and one for semiminiature or miniatures. Two rosettes will be provided for each class that is being offered; one for the Best Canadian Standard Collection and one for the Second Best Canadian Standard Collection, and one for the Best Canadian Semiminiature or Miniature Collection and one for the Second Best Canadian Semiminiature or Miniature Collection for a total of four rosettes. Two copies of your completed show schedule must be sent to the Affiliate Chairman for these rosettes, in advance of your show.

A Canadian hybridizer must hybridize all exhibits. That means that the person who breeds or hybridizes these plants must have been living in Canada at the time they were hybridized. A list of all Canadian Hybridizers is available at the Annapolis Valley African Violet Society Website: <http://www.avavs.com>. Valerie Despres, the A.V.S.C. Affiliate Chairman has done a wonderful job compiling it. You can download a copy to your desktop from their Website. In addition to the Canadian Hybridizers list, there is a Vintage Canadian Hybridizers list which is also available to be downloaded. Listed by hybridizer, you can search this list.

Your collection will be disqualified if a Canadian did not hybridize all three plants in your collection, even if all your plants are registered in First Class.

There are some Canadian hybridizers, who have not listed or registered their plants. They do not think it is necessary. It is the hybridizer's responsibility to list and/or register their plants in order to make sure that the information that is available is correct, the names are spelled right and that they are identifiable according to their descriptions. This

makes it possible for exhibitors to be confident that their plants are blooming according to the hybridizer's description, that the spelling of the varieties is correct, and that the plants that they have entered in the show are correctly named and blooming according to their description.

If you are hybridizing plants and releasing them to the public, both by sale and by giving them to others, it is your responsibility and obligation to make sure that the information is available and correct. Only you can do this!

Next to be considered is that all three plants (exhibits) **must be registered** with The African Violets Society of America and have a registered number. Plants that are listed in First Class, sometimes referred to as the Master Variety List or listed in the African Violet Magazine qualify only if they have a registered number as no unnamed or unregistered plants are allowed in the collection classes.

At one time there was a Canadian Master Variety List. Sometimes you see the term A.V.S.C. registered, meaning that they may also have a registration number that was assigned in the Canadian Master Variety List. Such numbers are no longer used, or valid. This list went out of existence in the 1980's, but some copies still exist and these numbers are also included in the Canadian Hybridizers list that was compiled by Valerie Despres. They would appear as (CA85-0340) (1985) for example. This number refers to the variety 'Ann Hamilton' which was hybridized and registered by H. Griffins in 1985.

Here is an example of a Registered Canadian hybridized standard collection that would qualify for Class 1.

ACA's Canadian Wonder **Reg. No. 8222**
Hybridized by J. Brownlie Date: 07/20/1995
Small Standard

Semi double pink two-tone sticktite pansy/white ruffled edge. Variegated green and white, plain, quilted.

Robert Mayer **Reg. No. 8895**
Hybridized by D. Croteau Date: 11/20/2000
Standard

Semi double medium pink large star/raspberry edge. Dark green, quilted red/backed.

Sunshine Suzie

Hybridized by Y. Lambert
Standard

Reg. No. 6486

Date. 02/12/1987

Semi double dark blue frilled star. Variegated, pointed, quilted red/back.

All exhibits in Class 1 must be the same type, and in this case they must all be single -crown standards, or standard trailers. This information is available on First Class, if you are not sure, check to see that your plant is a standard as listed, not a semiminiature that has grown too large. You may also enter a collection of species Saintpaulia in this class if you wish. Remember, that they also must have a registration number.

And the last requirement is that the exhibitor must be a member of The African Violet Society of Canada in good standing. Your membership must be current and your renewal date will be needed for the necessary paperwork as that is your membership number. The African Violet Society of Canada does have an official score sheet, and it will be mailed to your club when you request your rosettes.

Class 2

This class is offered by The African Violet Society of Canada and has the same requirements as the previous class in regard to registered Canadian varieties, but it is made up of 3 semiminiatures or 3 miniature or 3 semiminiature trailers or 3 miniature trailers.

All the other requirements are the same, but your plants must all be either semiminiatures or miniatures. You cannot for example have a collection of two semiminiatures and one miniature, or two semiminiatures and one semiminiature trailer. They must all be the same type.

Class 3 and 4

These classes are sponsored by The African Violet Society of America and must meet all their requirements. At the club level, if your club is an affiliate of A.V.S.A. your club can request these rosettes once a calendar year from the African Violet Society of America. Your local Show Chairman must provide the Schedule Approval Chairman with two copies of your show schedule prior to approval to having your show. Refer to the African

Violet Society of America Handbook For Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges 2016 edition, for complete rules on collections. At that time you can also request rosettes that must be purchased from them. For information about cost of these rosettes, please refer to the African Violet Magazine². At the national level the African Violet Society of America provides these rosettes and they also provide any monetary award. These rosettes are sometimes referred to as the gold and purple rosettes. If the judges do not award all of the rosettes purchased, your club may use them for another year's show.

The gold rosette is awarded to the Best A.V.S.A. Registered Standard Collection. The purple rosette is awarded to the Second Best A.V.S.A. Registered Standard Collection. Similarly, a gold rosette is awarded to the Best A.V.S.A. Registered Semiminiature or Miniature Collection and a purple rosette is awarded to the Second Best A.V.S.A. Registered Semiminiature or Miniature Collection.

All plants entered in these classes **must be registered** and listed in First Class or the Master Variety List as no unnamed or unregistered plants are allowed. Only those plants that are registered are eligible for these classes. A new listing of a variety will qualify if it is published in the African Violet Magazine, as it may not be listed in the Master Variety List yet.

Canadian hybridized plants, which are registered in the Master Variety List, are also eligible for these classes. Just because plants are hybridized by a Canadian does not mean that you cannot enter them in these classes, as long as they are registered and meet the type requirements they qualify.

Depending upon which class you enter, you will have to make sure that all three of your plants are the same type, such as standard, standard-trailer, semiminiature, semiminiature trailer, miniature or miniature trailer, or species. Again check the Master Variety List or First Class to make sure that your exhibits are all the same type. It is easy to think that you have a miniature when it could be a semiminiature and visa-versa.

You must make sure that your African Violet Society of America membership is up-to-date as your membership number will be required for the A.V.S.A. Collection Score Sheet. The A.V.S.A. office

before publication in the African Violet Magazine, checks membership numbers and plant registration numbers.

To enter the African Violet Society of Canada collection classes, your membership in A.V.S.C. must be up-to-date. The expiry date on the label of 'Chatter' is your membership number and must be affixed to the paperwork.

Take a chance and put in a collection. You may be pleasantly surprised by the results.

¹The New Merriam-Webster Pocket Dictionary

²African Violet Society of America Handbook For Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges 2016 Edition



Notice of Proposed Amendment to AVSA Bylaws

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following proposed amendment to AVSA Bylaws Article III, Section 2, paragraph 2 will be voted on at the AVSA 2017 Annual Convention at Orlando, Florida. The proposed amendment would change the definition of Associate Member. Article III, Section 2, paragraph 2 currently reads:

Article III

Membership and Dues

Section 2

Membership:

There shall be the following classifications of membership:

1. *****

2. ASSOCIATE MEMBER: any one person living at the same address as a person having any other class of membership and by paying half the dues required for individual membership. If adopted, Article III, Section 2, paragraph 2 would read:

Article III

Membership and Dues

Section 2

Membership:

There shall be the following classifications of membership:

1. *****

2. ASSOCIATE MEMBER: any individual who pays half the dues required for individual

membership and who receives no magazine. Rationale: There is an increasing number of individuals who would like to belong to AVSA and support the work of AVSA, but have little interest in receiving a paper copy of the magazine. International members sometimes receive the magazine so late that the website passwords are out of date. If adopted, this will allow both the traditional member and the member who prefers an electronic lifestyle to have what they desire.

Mary Lou Harden, *Chair, AVSA Bylaws Committee*

Christel H Collier

Sue Ramser

Ruth Goeke

Lynne Wilson

Bob Green

The AVSA Bylaws Article XII read as follows:

These Bylaws may be amended at any annual business meeting or special meeting of the membership by two-thirds (2/3) vote provided that the changes have been: a. Approved by a majority of the Board of Directors for consideration of the membership. b. Distributed to the membership **at least forty-five (45) days prior to the meeting** at which they are to be considered or without notice by a nine-tenths (9/10) vote provided that the amendment has been approved for consideration at a meeting of the Board of Directors by a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

Why do you hybridize African violets? That was a question that came from a member of the audience in a presentation I was making, that caught me off guard. I suspect that if you asked this question of anyone who has tried their hand at hybridizing you'd probably get a wide range of answers. For some, hybridizing is a passion to create the "perfect" African violet. To obtain their ideal plant that contains a certain combination of dream traits that the hybridizer can picture in their mind's eye. They hybridize to turn those dreams into reality. For others, hybridizing likely feeds a certain gambler's instinct. If I cross A with B, what are the odds of getting something new or different in the offspring? Do I feel lucky? Will my gamble be successful? Will I get a show winner if I make this cross as compared to making that one? For other hybridizers, the act of pollinating a plant, watching a seed pod or fruit develop, sowing the seed and growing out the tiny seedlings to a full sized blooming plant is an act of imitating Mother Nature. Seeing life renewed through the cycle of birth and growth. The botanist's equivalent of the "Circle of Life" if you will. For myself, I answered that hybridizing was as a way of satisfying my scientific curiosity. I want to know which traits are dominant? Which traits are recessive? Is it possible to combine trait A with trait B on the same plant? If so, what parents should I use and what are the odds of getting a particular outcome? For me, setting up ideas, making crosses to test my hypotheses and seeing if the data supports the hypotheses is what satisfies my need to hybridize.

As I write this column, I am saddened by the unexpected loss of friend and fellow hybridizer Kent Stork. I never asked Kent why he hybridized. I'm sure he had his own reasons and responses to this question. Whatever those reasons, a hybridizer does achieve a little bit of immortality through their



plants. Their creations outlive them to be enjoyed by current growers and those who have not yet discovered the joy of our hobby. Hybridizers leave a piece of themselves behind with their creations. This might not be the reason for "why" we hybridize, but it may provide a small measure of comfort in times of loss.

Q: What is a "red" African violet? Most of the plants I see look more mauve. Is there really a true "red"?

A: Flower color is sometimes in the eye of the beholder as each of us process light slightly differently. There is also a problem with past terminology on what we meant by a "red" in the world of African violets.

In my mind, the closest to a true "rose red" is in the color that is sometimes called a "coral red". 'Tomahawk' and 'Powwow' (Kent Stork hybrids) were some of the first plants with this flower color. Several of the Mac's hybrids (George McDonald) have been developed with this shade. Coral red is a double recessive color. Blue is dominant to red and non-coral shades are dominant to coral shades. When red and coral are combined together as a double recessive, the color is close to a true "rose red", especially when viewed in natural light or under grow-lux lights.

The coral shade mutation is more recent than the red mutation. In older plants, flowers that were "red" and "non-coral" were often sold or described as being "red". Compared to the dominant blue flowers of the time, the name "red" wasn't a bad description of the color. However, these are the shades that now we would describe as "mauve". The color just isn't a true "rose red". Unfortunately, the description "red" is still given to this shade, hence the source of your confusion.

To go one step further, the best "coral reds" also contain a third recessive trait. This trait is for

a co-pigment that adds a touch of “blue” overtone to the color. The dominant is to produce the co-pigment and the “bluing” effect. The recessive is to lack the co-pigment. Coral red flowers with the co-pigment are often described as looking a bit “dirty”; their colors just aren’t as bright. Coral red flowers that lack the co-pigment are probably the closest thing to “rose red”. However, getting a triple recessive is challenging for hybridizers to achieve in one plant, therefore the color remains a bit elusive to find.

Q: What are pattern genes?

A: In addition to genes that control the colors or pigments that are made in flowers, there are genes that determine the distribution of the pigments across the petals of the flower. These genes are the “pattern” genes and determine how the pigments are distributed. Some examples are: fantasy spots, raspberry edges, Geneva edges, thumbprint and others. Usually, the color genes are inherited separately from the pattern genes enabling a much wider variety of color combinations and patterns.

Q: Are wasp flowers always single flowers?

A: While it is true that many plants with wasp flowers are also single flowers, the wasp petal type is not restricted to singles. Wasps can occur as semi-double and double flowers. The later combinations have not been hybridized frequently, possibly because the shape of the flower becomes unruly. If you are looking for something to hybridize that would be a bit different, consider trying to combine the wasp trait with higher petal counts.

Q: Why do some fantasy flowers show the pattern as dots and as others as streaks? Is this a genetic difference?

A: Here is a case where I have a hypothesis but lack hard data. My hypothesis is that there is a dose difference between dots and streaks. I think that dots represent a double dose of the fantasy trait and streaks represent a single dose. My rea-

soning is that fantasy works by switching pigment production genes off and on. If the switch is “on” for a longer period of time as would happen if only one copy is present, more cells are produced with that color and a streak is the result. If the pigment production genes are switching off and on more rapidly, as would be expected if two copies are present, the number of cells with the new color are few in number and a dot is produced. The actual situation is probably more complicated than this simple model, but this may be a workable way to interpret dots and stripes in fantasy plants for hybridizers to use in planning crosses.

Q: Is flower size inherited? I've seen big plants with small sized flowers and small plants with really big flowers.

A: I'm sure that flower size is a genetically controlled trait, but I don't have a working hypothesis at this point as to how the trait is controlled. My rough guess is that I think several genes are involved and there isn't a simple dominant or recessive trait that explains all the situations. Flower size may be linked to the plant size, but that is probably a loose connection. Miniatures sometimes do have smaller flowers than large standards, but I'm sure every reader can think of exceptions. There have been some recent hybrids where small plants have full sized blooms, covering the foliage with flowers. These seem to be of more recent origins, so perhaps some mutations or new linkage of traits are involved.

We classify trailing African violets by the leaf size, not the plant size. Flower size often follows a similar pattern of larger flowers on larger leafed plants, but again, there are exceptions. So far I haven't been able to determine a pattern for how flower size is inherited.

I'm sure some of the hybridizers reading this column have some ideas and perhaps even have some data. I'd be happy to talk with anyone regarding this question.





Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

'Buckeye Seductress'

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis

Hybridized by: Pat Hancock



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

'N. Avatar'

Best Semiminiature

3rd Best African Violet in the Show

Exhibited by: Dmitry Ozherelyev & Nina Starostenko

Hybridized by: Nadezhda Berdnikova

HOW NOT TO HATE YOUR HOBBY

By Margaret Califano

I've been growing African violets since I was a teen - it's been a few years. Over the years my interest and collection waxed and waned. Now and then I would grow weary with the effort, balanced by delving into making them as prize-worthy as I could manage. When speculating about why that is so, what makes some years great and others not so much, it boils down to several factors:

- Exposure to shows, greenhouses and other sales venues. If you look at your collection and there isn't much of a spark of interest, then seeing new varieties or the superbly grown entries in shows can really be inspiring. Many times I've come away from a show and sale with new plants and a renewed attitude.

- It's too difficult in your plant area to do what you have to do. If you have to fight to find the potting mix, tools, pots and space to do what should be done regularly, it isn't going to get done. Let's face it, who wants to do a lot of work before all the repotting and cleaning work that the plants require? I'm fortunate to have a spare bedroom that is a dedicated plant room. I know, I know, not everyone can spare a room for just their plants.

To make it even more obnoxious, there's a planting bench inside the plant room, so a permanent potting space is always available. But there can be other solutions for the problem. I know of someone who used to have a folding card table with a cover for it that acted as a soil catcher. It was easy to set up, and had an advantage of portability. Having the pots, soil, and other necessities in a box or rolling cart would ease getting started. A defined workspace in a basement or other low-traffic living area could make 'violet time' more enticing. I repot much more frequently now that the whole process is simplified.

- Your conditions are getting in the way of the plants growing well. If you put effort into buying plants and attending to them, you need an area where they have a chance at growing well, or

discouragement follows pretty quickly. If your only growing area is a window with a northern exposure, you'll have beautiful green foliage, but few, if any flowers. If it's a southern exposure, you're trying to keep them from bleaching. Artificial lighting has the advantage that you won't have to deal with the vagaries of the window environment-changing light intensities; too cold or too warm air; needing to turn the pots to keep the plants symmetrical.

There's new lighting options that would help in small spaces. There are single tube-light sticks that can be mounted under a shelf, and LED strips that are very light in weight and can be mounted easily as well.

Cheap rolling wire stands come in a variety of sizes and can be converted into a growing area quickly with inexpensive shop light florescent fixtures in the old T12 style, or the newer and more energy efficient T8 configuration.

If you already have light stands, but they are crowded or inconvenient, it doesn't help if you have to fight to get to them, or have to get on your hands and knees to access them. Rearranging the shelves to be higher, or having sliding trays that can be pulled out for easier access can save your back.

- There's no quarantine area. This doesn't sound like much, but put a new, sick plant in with your healthy, carefully tended current ones and boom! Many a good grower has been driven out of the hobby by not quarantining new plants and losing the pest wars. It's incredible how fast an infestation or disease can spread, and is also very hard to tell.

Even if you're short on space, enclosing the new plant completely in a plastic bag or domed container can help tremendously. Don't be in a hurry to let the plant out of isolation either, because symptoms can take a while to develop. I recommend three months, minimum.

You overdid it! Ah success! "Hey, wait, I have how many plants?" It's so easy to do, the tasty varieties, what's one or ten, more? If you spend more time than you want to in a week with plant work and you can't possibly keep up, you might want to reassess your collection.

Many times I've felt tied to the plant routine and the longer it takes to do "musts," such as consistent watering, the more you're likely to put it off, to the plants' detriment and your growing dissatisfaction. Culling the herd every so often is a necessity. Plants crowded on light shelves don't thrive and can be a hotbed of infection if something gets loose. All in all, if it's too much, then it's not fun.

I used to save every leaf and every sucker in the past, but being more aware of what my accommodations and my time can tolerate, I only keep

some extra for club sales and auctions. Still, I end up with plants that I don't want, or that don't like my conditions, so I try to find a new home for them. Besides supporting my local club, these extra plants can be gifts or donations. Just recently I called a local nursing home and asked whether they would mind some free plants and they said they had residents that loved plants and sure they would love to have them. For nursing homes I would recommend that you find out first if it's ok and to only bring plants that are mature and not starters, because they will have a better chance of surviving random care.

Remember why you're doing all this! It's supposed to be fun!

From the *Empire Violet Magazine*,
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AVSA Convention 2017 Judges Breakfast Notes

Paul Kroll • Orlando, Florida

One of the most important programs on the convention schedule each year is the judges breakfast. This is the only real opportunity for AVSA Judges to get together and to ask questions of Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Chair and his committee. There is a box on or near the registration table into which anyone can put questions to be covered at the judges breakfast. Some years there are more questions than others, but this year there were many.

The judges breakfast and questions/discussions are for the purpose of clarification and continuity in judging.

After returning home, I typed up my notes from that meeting and sent them off to the Shows and Judges Committee and to some of my AVSA friends who are judges, but were unable to attend. The questions, answers and points covered are essential to interpret the latest instructions and the oldest of instructions. Nearly all the questions can be answered by the advice Bill often gives, "Read the HANDBOOK"!

It seems that most years the same judges judge the same class(es) at convention. Can this be changed?

Some changes will be made in the future. Bill strives to assign judges where they claim they have expertise.

Mary Corondan assured us that there will be better organization of the Judges and Clerks instructions. It is planned to email the lead judge on each team of their assignments ahead of the convention. All the information for each team will be in a manila envelope with the team names of judges and clerks on the outside.

Judges and clerks requesting assignments for the convention show will be asked for their cell phone numbers at the time of application. Bill Foster prefers that requests be made by email, since it is easiest for him to respond that he has received your request.

Meredith Hall receives the Collection Sheets and quite often there will be duplicate scores. Bill requests that fractions be used, especially above 95 points, so that duplicate scores are avoided.

A judge recently refused to judge designs where the AVs were not named. Wrong. Sometimes, the show schedule does not require a card identifying plant material used in designs, so why have the AV named?

Regarding container gardens, Bill stressed again that your best AV should be entered into the horticulture division of the show. It is possible to use an "inferior" AV in container gardens: a trailer with 1 or 2 crowns, etc. Remember the scale and proportion of your garden. Do not use large AVs. Bill also reiterated the fact that the blooming AV in any container garden just needs to be there. It does not need to be front-and-center, nor does it have to be the focal point. It can be hidden somewhere in the landscape plan.

Be careful when judging container gardens. The plant material is often too high and out of scale and proportion. Remember that the height of a planting must be achieved by plant material and not by an accessory such as a rock or piece of wood. Landscape plans need to have hills, valleys, etc. and flat landscapes are not as interesting as those which have the mountains and valleys, etc.

AVs entered into the unusual/decorative container classes must be named, as it is possible that one of those plants could be best in show, with rescoring the AV separate from the container. READ THE HANDBOOK! It is allowed to have "ground cover" (i.e. sphagnum moss) in an unusual or decorative container to cover the soil. No other growing plant material is allowed.

The Handbook states that air bubbles may add to the attraction in an underwater arrangement. At a recent show, one judge refused to judge an underwater arrangement because it had bubbles in it. READ THE HANDBOOK!

The wording regarding the size of standard AVs is being reworked. It is imperative to know that no standard sized plant is to be eliminated from consideration for a prize, no matter what its diameter. Points may be deducted (up to 3), but the plant should NEVER be eliminated. The final wording will appear in the September-October issue of the AVM.

One question was "design judging is atrocious"; poor designs are being awarded prizes and good designs are not. Why? Awarding prizes to undeserving design entries is wrong. Remember that the Elements and Principles of Design should be utilized when judging and the exhibits point scored if necessary. Design should be covered in the judging schools and most often is not.

A question was asked about an *Episcia* in the show that was in a pot and exhibited in a domed container. This is allowed, with the cover being removed briefly for judging purposes and then replaced. Some gesneriads need that extra humidity. READ THE HANDBOOK!

There is an error in the narration on the DVD on *Saintpaulia* species. It is erroneously stated that trailing types of *Saintpaulia* species are sometimes considered for the Best Trailer award. This is wrong. The term trailer refers to hybrid trailers. Species are species, regardless of type. READ THE HANDBOOK!

All collections must be point scored! Occasionally, scores of 100 points are awarded. It is extremely rare that there would be a perfect plant. Exceedingly high scores are difficult to deal with. READ THE HANDBOOK!

Are records reports and collection sheets, judges, etc. kept by AVSA? No records are kept, but the schedule approver can usually answer any questions if asked within a reasonable period of time.

If there are errors found on the SSA score sheet, they should be reported to the judges who signed it.

If the SSA score sheet is not returned, the judges who signed it cannot use that show to document their judging experience.

Judges should be certain that they sign each collection sheet and the SSA award before leaving the show.

Is it possible new introductions may be entered by number only, as opposed to having the hybridizer's name on the tag? Yes, that is the way it used to be done and can still be done that way.

It is emphasized that clerks in AVSA shows should not be outspoken. They may be asked by the judges for information, etc.

If a person taking the judging school does not yet have their required blue ribbons, do they have to wait? Yes. The credentials and judges card will be held until the required ribbon documentation is received by Bill Foster.

Might it be possible to have a 3 x 5 card placed with the plant(s) entered into the sport or mutant class listing the description of the original plant? This would help the judges to know just what the original plant looked like if they are not familiar with it. A 3 x 5 card may be placed by any exhibit to clarify any point the exhibitor wants the judges to know.

If one judge on a panel of three is called away, or has to leave, another judge should be appointed to replace that person so that the panel of three would be maintained.

Winston Goretsky explained that the electronic (pdf) version of the HANDBOOK is not "writeable". It is not possible to type in corrections and/or your personal notes. When official corrections or changes are made, they will, – as always, – be printed in the Shows and Judges column of the AVM and then new pages for the loose-leaf HANDBOOK will be printed and made available.

AVSA Collection sheets must be made available to the judges before final awards are chosen. This is the only way that judges can be sure that the highest scoring plant(s) are properly awarded.

Might it be possible for the timing to achieve the highest judging status, be changed? Bill Foster said that this can be investigated, but he reminded everyone that so many judges do not pay attention to their own personal schedule. Many judges could have applied for the senior exam years before they actually do. Keep track of your schools, exams and years of service so that your rank will be accomplished in the shortest amount of time.

Mary Corondan stated that she can no longer accept the entire printout of the show awards from

affiliates. This requires her to search for the proper awards she needs. Since that is no longer an option, PLEASE USE THE FORM PROVIDED in the AVSA packet for your reports. The form may be sent via snail mail, scanned and sent via email or even a photo of it taken on your phone and sent via email. It is also possible to send them to the website: avsa.org

Judges were admonished to judge what you see. So often judges are overheard saying something like, "We have seen that grown better". This is wrong. Although we all remember those outstanding plants we have seen, we must judge what we

see and not against what we remember.

All judges need refresher courses! All judges are encouraged to attend a school now and then to refresh their minds. Barb Werness receives an occasional request for a copy of the senior exam from individuals who believe in continuing education. These people do not have to return the exam, but it is a good way to keep informed.

Bill Foster's Column is the official place for changes and additions and clarifications to be published. This article is merely to bring all the issues from the discussion at the judges breakfast to the attention of all judges. READ THE HANDBOOK!

The Five Best AVM Article Awards and the AVSA Article Contest Winners were Announced at the 2017 AVSA Convention in Orlando, Florida

Sue Hoffmann, Publications Chairman
<violetsue123@outlook.com>

The winners are:

Best Articles

1. Grooming for Show ... Grooming as you Grow
Kurt Jablonski Nov/Dec 2016 pg. 14
2. Kent Stork's Method of Hitting Full Bloom on
the Day of the Show
Kent Stork Jan/Feb 2016 pg. 54
3. Repotting: A Combat Sport
Sandi Mynatt July/August 2016 pg. 20
4. Back to our Roots Maureen Pratt
Nov/Dec 2016 pg. 18
5. "You're Joking, Right?"
Kurt Jablonski May/June 2016 pg. 24

2016-2017 Contest Winners

1. Kurt Jablonski
"Grooming for Show ... Grooming as you Grow"
Nov/Dec 2016
2. Sandra Skalski "How to Eliminate Thrips"
March/April 2017

3. Sandi Mynatt

"Repotting: A Combat Sport"
July/August 2016

Honorable Mention Articles

1. Paul Kroll "Suggestions for Writing a
Design Schedule"
Nov/Dec 2016
2. Vicki Ferguson "Cultivating a Successful Club"
July/August 2016
Carol Schorn "African Violets and Cats"
May/June 2017

Congratulations to all our AVM authors! Our Members enjoyed your articles and with so many excellent entries this year, the judges had a hard time deciding on the top winners.

Please consider submitting your own article to the *African Violet Magazine*.

We'd like to hear your story!



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Buckeye Freckles Galore

Exhibited by: Linda Lieu

Hybridized by: P. Hancock

Large

Honoring Our Outstanding AVSA Members

Honorary One-Year Memberships

Recipient: Sharon Shannon

The African Violet Society of America would like to thank Sharon Shannon for her outstanding leadership as Convention Chair for the 2016 AVSA Convention: "Violets Color the Land of Enchantment" in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For her service, she is receiving an AVSA One-Year Honorary Membership.

Recipient: Kathy Bell

The African Violet Society of America would like to thank Kathy Bell for her outstanding leadership as Show Chair for the 2016 AVSA Convention: "Violets Color the Land of Enchantment" in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For her service, she is receiving an AVSA One-Year Honorary Membership.

Recipient: Dave Harris

The next recipient has improved the overall quality and beauty of the Gesneriad plant *Sinningia* over the past six (6) to ten (10) years with his hybridizing of the Ozark Series of the *Sinningia*. He supports the AVSA membership with his commercial sales of African violets and other gesneriads at the conventions.

In recognition of his achievements, Dave Harris is awarded an AVSA One-Year Honorary Membership.

Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Award

Recipient: Mel Grice

The recipient of the Mabel & Glenn Hudson Memorial Award is a member of both the Dayton and Cincinnati African Violet Societies. He is a Senior Judge and is currently serving on the AVSA Special Awards Committee; he has served as

AVSA Affiliate Chair, on the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee. True legend has it that he has been growing violets since he was ten (10) years old. He has served as President of the Dayton AVS from 2010 through 2012, and as President of the Cincinnati AVS from 2014-2015 (and part of 2016). He has also served as Program Chair for Dayton AVS and Vice-President of Programs for Cincinnati AVS. During his service in Dayton AVS and under his promotional leadership, the club more than doubled its membership, growing from ten (10) members to twenty-five (25) members. He is a member of the Ohio State Judges Council and the Ohio State AVS. As a "teacher" in the Gesneriad Society, he has consistently provided 'hands-on' education on a variety of topics, including 'other' gesneriads. As a grower, he is always generous with starter plants, donating generously to new club members and those from the general public who show interest. He is also a great designer, providing programs on 'design' for Judges Council and various AVSA clubs, and 'fills in' when programs are needed at the last minute. He continually promotes AVSA and its many clubs through his publications, as an editor of "The Violet Connection" in the Ohio State Magazine for more than ten (10) years, and as a contributor to the Gesneriad column in the African Violet Magazine. He has been described by many as a 'wonderful worker when needed,' and a 'wonderful promoter for AVSA and local affiliates. Please join me in recognizing Mel Grice as the 2017 recipient of the Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Award.

Honorary Lifetime Membership

Recipient: Winston Goretsky

Our outgoing AVSA President received the Honorary Lifetime Membership for serving as AVSA President for the years 2015-2017.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Primulina Linearifolia

Exhibited by: Janice Davidson

A Family Portrait

Bellonia spinosa

By Paul Kroll
East Aurora, New York

Bellonia spinosa is native to the Caribbean Islands. It is the only gesneriad known to have thorns, hence the species name. Those thorns are quite soft, however and not like rose thorns. It is similar in appearance to boxwood, but the foliage is very soft to the touch.

I had grown and bloomed this plant years ago, but this one – obtained three years ago at the Gesneriad Society convention plant sales – has not yet bloomed, and shows no thorns at this time. Apparently the thorns appear when it blooms. The blossoms are small and white and last a day or two.

As the plant grows, the stems become quite woody. Perhaps that also has to do with the formation of the thorns. It is somewhat difficult to propagate from cuttings, with only the tender shoots taking root.

The last time I grew a plant of *Bellonia spinosa*, it was quite happy growing “out” on the shelf, with no extra humidity provided. The plant I am growing now is in terrarium conditions. It wilts when the cover is removed for any length of time.

This plant has been growing under two T-8 tubes, in the center of the shelf. I have tried to acclimate rooted cuttings to grow in the open, to no avail so far. It is an attractive plant and could be used in container gardens with success. Terrarium conditions would be necessary for this plant, but perhaps you might be successful in getting it to grow out of the terrarium in your plant room conditions.

Regular soil mix, weekly watering with 1/4 strength fertilizer and lights on twelve hours per day are the conditions under which it has been flourishing.



AVSA BOOSTER FUND

Dianna Walston • 2210 S. Courtland Ave., Kokomo, IN 46902
Donations received May 1 - June 30, 2017 • Donations Total: \$1,110.00



Geneva- \$100-\$499

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In memory of Kent Stork
In honor of Joyce Stork from the
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In memory of Kent Stork
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In lieu of judges fees for Bob Kurzynski,
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Multicolor - \$50-\$99

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Shuffle off to Buffalo Fellow Violet Lovers!

Hopefully this will be your motto in the coming months. The Queen City is honored to be the host city for the combined 2018 AVSA/AVSC National Convention. Together with our good friends just North of here, we have been busy looking forward to plan a fabulous Convention experience for one and all. Our convention hotel, The Adam's Mark, is located in the downtown area. Buffalo is a "big little city" and from your hotel you can walk to the waterfront and the Naval Park. The weather in late May and early June is mild and conducive to the many activities you will come across during your evening stroll.

Be sure to see the light show on the old Grain Elevator! Buffalo now features a redeveloped waterfront, restored architectural gems, a thriving culinary and craft beer scene, and world-renowned art museums. In 2018 our system of parks and parkways designed by Frederick Law Olmsted will celebrate its 150th anniversary, and there are sure to be some wonderful activities associated with that celebration.

We take our gardening seriously here with the largest Garden Walk in the US featuring over 400 gardens. That takes place the last week in July but you are welcome to stay. There is plenty to occupy you here. An easy to use Metro train and bus system will take you up and down Main Street where you can stop at a variety of historical places or wonderful restaurants. If you would like to venture beyond Main Street, Uber will be available. More specifics will be forthcoming in additional issues. Our Botanical Gardens are a mere fifteen minutes from downtown, and just a block away from the magnificent Our Lady Of Victory Basilica.

There truly is something for everyone in Buffalo - outdoor activities, fine dining, craft brews, wine trails, casinos, wonderful old historic buildings, art, theater and we are of course the home of Buffalo Chicken Wings!

If that isn't enough, Canada is the next street over. Why not plan to extend your convention time and see what all we have to offer other than a very nice hotel.





*Immediate AVSA Past President Winston J. Goretsky and wife Laurel.
Winston received the Honorary Life Membership.*



PT - 'Luiza'

*Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis*

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

"And the winners are ..." 434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

By Mary Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AVS OF GREATER TULSA, OK – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tomorrow's Pink Ice, Natural Rose Gem, Cajun's Coujon; Best in Show/Best Standard: AE-It's Raining, **Sherrie Wallace**. Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Design, **Judith Carter**. Best Miniature: Persian Prince; Best Trailer: Rob's Sailor Bill; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Loki'; Best Species: *S. rupicola*; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Patricia Daniel**.

CENTRAL CALIFORNIA AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara EverBeautiful, Optimara myDream, Wild Irish Rose; Best Standard: Optimara myJoy; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Deanna Warkentin**. Best in Show: Irish Flirt, **Oriana Harrison**. Best Species: *S. 5c1* clone Sigi Falls; Best Gesneriad: *Alsobia dianthiflora*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Renee Wilson**. Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo, **Jerry Warkentin**.

DALLAS METRO AVS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Orchard's Bumble Magnet, Precious Red; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Fireball; Best Standard: Jersey Snow Flakes; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Dale's Starry Night'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Margery Anderson-Clive**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cajun's Lil Sprinkles, Rob's Boogie Woogie, Rob's Dodo Bird, **Suzanne Roberts**. Design Sweepstakes, **Sylvia Leeds**.

DESERT SUN AV & GESNERIAD SOCIETY, AZ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: EK-Goluboglazaia Rossiia, Halo's Aglitter, Rebel's Iced Kake; Best Standard: Rebel's Iced Kake, **Barbara Reith**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Lollipop Kid, Ness' Satin Rose, Rob's Antique Rose; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Antique Rose;



Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Marty Anderson**. Best in Show/Best Miniature: Precious Red, **Susan Kim**. Best Species: *S. 8* clone *rupicola*, **Allan Reith**. Best Gesneriad: *Amalophyllon clarkia*, **Dariane Joshlin**. Best Design, **Annette Wyckoff**.

EARLY BIRD AVC, AL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Frances Young, Wrangler's Dixie Celebration, Harbor Blue; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Michael Jackson**. Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Slap Happy; Best Trailer: Ramblin' Amethyst; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Stardust', **Sandra Campbell**. Best Standard: Cajun's Cherished Hope; Best Miniature: Toronto Belle, **Brenda Posey**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Donna Henderson**.

FANTASY AVC, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Red Ferrari, Buckeye Seductress, Harbor Blue; Best in Show/Best Standard: Red Ferrari, **Sally Scaggs**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Suncoast Lavender Silk, Chicago Flair, Apache Primrose; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Munchkin Kisses, Jolly Texan, Lil Glimpse o' Spring; Best Semiminiature: Munchkin Kisses; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Fred's Yellow Ice'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Carol Chmiko**. Best Trailer: Rob's Vanilla Trail, **Bonnie Tuberville**. Best Design, **Ruth Huhner**. Design Sweepstakes, **Pat Diebold**.

FIRST AVS OF DENTON, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Coujon, Paula's PB and J, Rebel's Rose Bud; Best Standard: Cajun's Coujon; Best Trailer: Alan's Fallen Angel, **Richard Nicholas**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Eternal Orbit, Rob's Inner Orbit, Rob's Delicious; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Inner Orbit; Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Anne Nicholas**. Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *diplo-*

tricha, **Glenda Curry**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Kim', **Linda Turner**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Danny Tidwell**.

HEART OF JACKSONVILLE AVS, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Victorian Parasol, Cajun's Blueberry Hill, Buckeye Seductress, **Sharon Gartner**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Hawaii II, Buckeye Colossal, Blue Dragon; Best Standard: Optimara Hawaii II, **Nancy Sacco**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Orchard's Bumble Magnet, Rob's Lilliputian; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Trailer: Harmony's Gunder Too; Best Design, **Linda McQueen**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Orchard's Bumble Magnet, Optimara Little Moonstone, Persian Prince, **Cathy Carter**. Best Semiminiature: Moon Craze; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bobbi Johannsen**. Best Species: *S. clone confusa*, **Christina Berry**.

MAGIC KNIGHT AVS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rebel's Rose Bud, Apache Primrose, Cajun's Roses Anyone; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Jam, Cajun's Lil Sprinkles, California Sunset, **Dale Parker**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Little Blue Bandit, Jolly Kid, Jolly Orchid; Best Miniature: Little Blue Bandit; Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus* 'Coral Flame'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Ken Froboese**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Rose Bouquet; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Satin Rose; Best Species: *S. clone diplotricha* Parker, **Marie Miller**. Best Trailer: Ellie Gardner, **Steven Spachek**. Best Design, **Irene Harney**. Design Sweepstakes, **Jane Rexilius**.

MEMPHIS AVS, TN – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Sundowners, Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion, Tahitian Sunset; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Dean's Cupid, Thunder Surprise; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Fuddy Duddy; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Brenda Brasfield**. Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo; Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea minor*; Best Design, **Geneva Stagg**. Best Species: *S. clone grandifolia* #237, **Marian Zoller**. Design Sweepstakes, **Rocky Bichon**.

OMAHA AV & GESNERIAD SOCIETY, NE –

Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Mischief, Lyon's June Bug, California Sunset; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Randy Deutsch**. Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Jan; Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Pink Smoke', **Brandon Erikson**. Best Design, **Diann Dunn**. Design Sweepstakes, **Claude Smith**.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN AV COUNCIL, CO – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Queen Sabrina, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Celina Dark Velvet; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Trudy Brekel**. Best Standard: Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion; Best Design, **BJ Ohme**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Jasmin', **Pat Eloee**. Design Sweepstakes, **Melissa Shopnitz**.

SHO-ME AVC, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Chanticleer, Northern Beauty, Buckeye Scrumptious; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Lucky Number, Rob's Twinkle Pink, Rob's Lucky Charm; Best in Standard: Chanticleer; Best Semiminiature: Snow Leopard; Best Miniature: Rob's Lucky Number, **Lynn Canning**. Best Species Collection: *S. 5c1 clone tongwensis* Uppsala 3397, *S. 5b clone grotei*, *S. 5b clone orbicularis* var. *purpurea*; Best in Show/Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Best Species: *S. 5c1 clone tongwensis* Uppsala 3397; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Jay Vantuyl**. 2nd Best Species Collection: *S. 5b clone grotei*, *S. 5b clone confusa*, *S. 8 clone rupicola*, **Dale Cox**. Best Gesneriad: *Episcia* 'Ronnie', **Juanita Mallory**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Linda Hall**.

SOUTH COAST AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Dragon, Buckeye Seductress, Frozen in Time; Best Standard: Buckeye Seductress, **Mary Smith**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Tiptop, Rob's Bo Peep, Thunder Surprise; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Trailer: Broadway Star Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina queilinensis*; Best Species: *S. clone rupicola*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Leonard Re**. Best Design, **Joyce Dean**. Design Sweepstakes, **Jacquie Eisenhut**.

SPRING BRANCH AVC, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Picasso, Buckeye

Nostalgia, Rebel's Rose Bud; Best in Show/Best Standard: Picasso, **Wayne Geeslin**. Best Semiminiature: Sunshine Lady Sport, **Gary Thurman**. Best Miniature: Mini Minx; Best Species: *S. rupicola*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Norma Flynn**. Best Trailer: Shiawasee Trail, **Donna McGraw**. Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus radicans*, **Johnny Williams**. Best Design, **Vickie Crider**. Design Sweepstakes, **Jane Rexilius**.

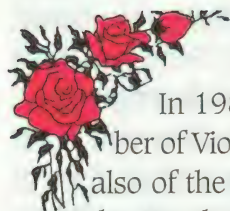
SUNDOWNERS AVS, LA – Winner: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Ma Cher Amie, Cajun's Zydeco, Cajun's Love's Verse; Best in Show/Best Standard: Cajun's Ma Cher Amie; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Belinda Thibodeaux**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Outer Orbit, Rob's Scrumptious; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Scrumptious; Best Miniature: Rob's Jitterbug, **Laura Moser**. Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 5a* clone *grandifolia* No. 299, *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert, *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather; Best Trailer: Kentucky Rambler; Best Species: *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert, **Wilhelmina Allen**. 2nd Best AVSA Species Collection: *S. 8* clone *rupicola*, *S. 5c1* clone *ionantha*, *S. 5b* clone *confusa*; Best Gesneriad: *Chrysothemis pulchella*, **Robbie McMeel**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Susie Smith**.

SWEET WATER AVS, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Heavenly Notes, Shazam, Buffalo Hunt; Best in Show/Best Stan-

dard: Shazam; Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Miniature: Gleeeful Elf; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Species: *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather E; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Jeanette Haynal**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Lil' Georgie', **Jeanne Damasco**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Caroline Klein**.

TAMPA AVS, FL – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Spanish Moss, Cajun Popcorn, Buckeye Delightful; Best Trailer: Cherokee Trail; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Mary Lou Harden**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Dean's Ruby, Jolly Texan, Lil Glimpse o' Spring; Best Species: *S. clone grandifolia*, **Terry Jordan**. Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Magic, **Angelina Grundhoff**. Best Standard: Ness' Candy Pink, **Angela Newell**. Best Gesneriad: *Aeschynanthus*, **Nancy Cast**.

THOUSAND OAKS AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Blue Scoundrel, Jolly Jubilee, Rob's Lucky Number; Best Species Collection: *S. 3* clone *shumensis*, *S. 5c1* clone Sigi Falls, *S. 5c1* clone House of Amani; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Blue Scoundrel; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Fernwood's Minuet'; Best Species: *S. 5c1* clone Sigi Falls; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Maureen Pratt**. Best Standard: King of Diamonds; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Hallucination; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Barbara Burde**.



In Memory of Elisabeth Stanley

In 1980 Elisabeth was a Charter Member of Violet Patch AVS of South Florida and also of the Bloomin' Violets & Gesneriads of Palm Beach in 2005. She grew beautiful violets but was better known as the "Episcia Lady" always generously giving cuttings of her plants.

Elisabeth was always friendly, welcoming and

busy as a bee doing the club's business. She was 2nd VP, librarian & in charge of supplies. If you needed help, she was always there tirelessly teaching & giving demonstrations.

It is hard to imagine the violet world without her. Elisabeth will surely be missed by everyone who knew her. May her Memory be Eternal.

***'Allegro
Chicory
Charm'***

*Exhibited by:
Penny Smith-Kerker*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



'Spin-Out'

*Exhibited by:
Penny Smith-Kerker*

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Love the Allegros Boxes *A Tribute to Janet Stromborg*

By Sylvia A Farnum, PhD • avbratsylvia@gmail.com

The over 1000 members of the African Violet Brat Pack 2 online forum, <http://avbratpack2.proboards.com/> were saddened when Janet Stromborg, the long-time owner of the Brat Pack passed away in January 2017. Janet is remembered by all of the "Brats" as a generous, cheerful, knowledgeable person. She was a mentor to many of the forum members and other violet growers.



Allegro Watermelon Ruffles grown by Sylvia

In addition to her devotion to the Brat Pack 2, Janet was a very talented and careful hybridizer of African violets. She used scientific methods with specific goals in mind to plan her crosses. She grew out every viable seed, sometimes over 200 seeds from a cross. Her hybrids, which bear the prefix, Allegro, after Janet's love of music, are known for their stability and beauty. She carefully selected over 100 plants to be named and listed in her Allegro series over the years.

We all missed Janet so very much after her passing. The Brat Pack 2 continues to be a vital forum, which provides information and violet fun, but we felt that we wanted to do something to honor Janet.

Four of our Brat Pack members volunteered to organize a unique event. We surveyed our membership to see who wanted to participate, and which Allegro plants they already grew. We used the lists of participants to plan. Three of us offered to donate

a large number of Allegro leaves.

At first we had thought to start a couple of Round Robin boxes of only Allegros. We found that the number of participants was too large for one or two boxes. When we discussed starting multiple boxes, we decided that the best approach would be to mail individual boxes.

The leaves that we could donate would have to be distributed safely to the participants. Our three leaf donors lived in Minnesota, Georgia, and Texas. The weather in Minnesota was cold and icy, while the weather in Georgia and Texas was beginning to be very warm. After a lot of discussion and consideration of the high costs of shipping, the three of us decided to donate the leaves and the postage to send a separate gift box of Allegro leaves to each of our participants.

All three of the leaf donors found special joy in sharing leaves of our favorite Allegros. There was one trailer, some minis, some semis, and some standard plants to share, over 270 leaves in all. We got to work following up the list of participants. We divided the mailing areas into the Western, Midwestern, Northeastern, and the Southeastern regions of the US. Our member in Texas filled boxes for the West. Our member in the Midwest (Sylvia) filled boxes for the Midwest and Northeast, and our member in Georgia filled boxes for the Southeastern participants.



Cutting trailer leaves and filling bags

We gave each participant leaves of ten Allegro varieties to start, unless they asked for fewer leaves. What excitement we felt when we mailed the large stacks of boxes!

We posted the lists of gift leaves for each person with the tracking numbers on the forum. As each participant received their box, they posted their reactions. Our smiles grew, as the number of successful transfers of leaves came in. We lost one box to very warm weather and slow mail, but it was replaced.



Packing Mailing Boxes

Now, we will see Janet remembered in a very special way. More of her beautiful Allegro plants will be flourishing across the US, and, we hope, will be shared with other violet hobbyists.



Allegro Pepto Pink grown by Sylvia



Allegro Blueberry Bliss grown by Sylvia

'Buckeye Tea Party'

Exhibited by:

Kurt Joblonski

Hybridized by:

Pat Hancock



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion

Hybridized and Exhibited by: Belinda Thibodeaux



Photo Credit: Erika Geimonen

Rhapsodie Joan

Hybridized by: Holtkamp

Small Standard

Growing African Violets in an Outdoor Shade House in India

By Lalan Prabhu, to the *African Violet Society of America, Inc.*

Photos by: Lalan Prabhu

I am an Indian, brought up in a joint family in India. We were a family of ten people living in a three-room apartment. But we had a big front yard and a huge backyard where my grandmother would grow all varieties of hibiscus and marigold. She had a large kitchen garden, too. I would tag along and toil with my granny in the garden. That's how I became an enthusiastic gardener.

Later, when I got married, and moved into my husband's bachelor home, we lived in a cottage with a huge garden and nobody around. I had a lot of spare time during which I started my own garden. We grew gladiolus, dahlias, hibiscus, marigolds, etc.

In India, we share our plants with our friends, and thus the barter helps us enhance our collection. This is how, about thirty years ago, I got hold of my first African violet. I fell in love with this particular plant almost instantly. The very fact that people told me that it's not easy to grow violets in a garden got me more interested in them. So this small plant, with its delicate leaves and even more delicate flowers, has been my companion since then. Slowly I started propagating violets and soon enough I had a decent collection of my own.

Later on, when I had to shift my home to another apartment, I moved our garden to the terrace. It is a 4,500 square foot terrace. We built a shade house especially for violets, orchids, Anthurium, and other shade-loving plants. The shade house is covered with AgroNet <http://www.shadenet.co/>. This product does not decay, it allows plenty of air to flow through, it can be washed, and it is easy to install or relocate. It provides 30-50% shade and limits the wind pressure to avoid damage to plants. It helps maintain humidity and offers protection from flying insects.

When I built this shade house twenty-five years ago, it was very new and unique here. These days, many people use the net above the plants or put it around a compound wall. It is still unusual to have a closed room like mine.



African Violets



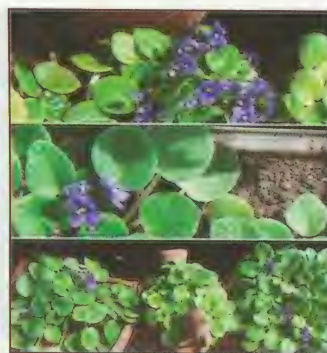
Shade House



Inside the Shadehouse

Violets in particular need very little water and a lot of shade. I plant them in small pots just enough to grow one plant and use humus soil. No fertilizers are used in my garden. The shade helps them thrive. It decreases the daytime temperature by 10° _Celsius (18° Fahrenheit).

Belgaum, my hometown, is blessed with good weather. We have three seasons: summer, winter and the rainy season. The yearly temperatures range from 15° _to 38° _C (60° _to 100° _F). We are around 100 kilometers away from the sea; hence humidity is around 50 to 75 percent. This climate suits these flowers well. I grow these violets along with wild and hybrid orchids, Anthurium, begonias, philodendron, Calla Lilies, asparagus, and fern. This could also contribute to their well being! I will be very happy if I get all colors of violets available. They are very beautiful.



Whenever a pot gets over full with plants, I repot them to ensure enough soil for the plants. Anyone who visits our garden gets one pot of African violets as a gift. This, according to me, is a very beautiful gift to receive, and is definitely accepted by all with a huge smile.

Mrs Lalan Prabhu. 1732.Ramdev Galli.Belgaum
3rd floor above United stores Karnataka 590001.

Originally Posted in African Violet Buddies, April
23, 2017.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Lakeshore Silver

Exhibited by: Beverley Williams

Hybridized by: J. Brownlie

Semiminiature



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Streptocarpus 'Wawel'

Exhibited by: Joann Freeman

'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler'

Exhibited by:

Kurt Jablonski

Hybridized by:

Pat Hancock

2nd Best African

Violet in Show



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



'Buckeye Patent Pending'

Exhibited by:

Kurt Joblonski

Hybridized by:

Pat Hancock

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Three Great Shows with Great Friends

By Kurt Jablonski

What a great time I had over the last year attending three African violet shows all across the country! Apart from all the beautiful plants on display, my favorite part of each show is all the special people I get to reconnect with and the many new friends I meet. It all started in March of 2016 when I was planning to attend the Dixie Convention and Show in Atlanta, GA. It just so happened that the show was over my 30th birthday weekend and I was in for a surprise. After arriving in Atlanta I was greeted by all my violet friends. What an amazing welcome!

The show was judged on Friday morning and to my delight I came away with several awards including Best in Show/Best Standard with 'Buckeye Tea Party.' So many other pretty plants were in the show including the Best Semiminia-ture, 'Rob's Outer Orbit' grown by my Martha Spyridon, the Best Miniature, 'Knight Magic' grown by Debbie McInnis and the Best Species, *S. Ionantha subsp. Ionantha var. Ionantha* shown by Carolee Carter. All in all the plants were lovely. During the entire weekend I was surrounded by friends and family. I was able to see some of the most important people in my life and many of them I met through this wonderful hobby. One of those people is my dear friend Sharon Gartner. Violets brought us together.

After the Dixie Show in March my thoughts were on the convention. I was debating how I would get there. I remember talking to Pat H., and she encouraged me to find a way there. Sharon to the rescue! We talked and decided that we would road trip it to Albuquerque. Sharon knew how much I wanted to go and helped make the trip happen. It was a "*Lucy and Ethel*" trip, so to speak. We talked life, violets, and everything in between. We laughed a lot. I feel lucky that Sharon is in my life and without violets I would never have met her.

Once we arrived in New Mexico we were greeted by many friends and made several new ones. Our first night we had a great New Mexican dinner with Sandy Skalski, Paula Bal, and Bob Clark. It was exciting to experience all that the city had to offer. The friends you make at violet shows are a reason to keep coming back!

Finally, showplants were entered, and we waited. One afternoon Sharon, Sandy, Paula, and I left the hotel to explore Sandia Peak via the tramway. We were over 14,000 feet into the mountains. It was a once in a lifetime opportunity. Honestly, I was a little frightened in a few spots; the drop was straight down! And views from the top were exceptional.

The time came for the awards dinner, which is always exciting. Our group was able to sit together. Bill Price came away this year with the coveted Best in Show/Best Species award with an exquisite *S.5c2 Clone Diplotricha* 'Parker.' My entry, *Buckeye Nostalgia* won 2nd Best in Show/Best Standard, while Mary Corondan had the 3rd Best in Show/Best Semi, with *Rob's Inner Orbit*. She also had the Best Trailer, '*Senk's Fruit Fly*.' Perennial winner, Anne Nicholas, had the Best Mini, '*Rob's Chilly Willy*,' a great show plant. There were so many beautiful entries in the show, and visitors were in awe of them.

As a final treat when the show was over, we all swapped leaves of those "must-have" varieties and winners as we packed up our plants. Violet people really are the most generous. I always have a bit of depression after convention because you are at such a high being around all of your violet friends, that when it's over, you are back to the nitty-gritty of everyday life. I call this the "convention blues." But there is always next year to look forward to, with the amazing friends you'll see again, and the new ones you'll meet.

Thankfully I still had one more show to attend. The final show of the season was the Ohio State Convention. Again, Sharon and I flew there together. That was a TRIP! Not only did we fly, but I attempted to bring a large showplant onboard (That's another story). This was my first time attending the show so I was in for a real treat. Not only was it an excellent show but also I met so many new people, and we had dinner together. The food was great but the company was even better.



Top Left: Paul Bal, Sandy Skalski, Kurt Jablonski and Sharon Gartner at the Sandia Peak Tramway. Bottom Left: Mel Grice, Kurt Jablonski and Pat Hancock at the Ohio State 2016 Show. Top Right: Kurt Jablonski holding Buckeye Nostalgia at Albuquerque National Show. Bottom Right: Gail Hunneyman (Kurt's Mom), Kurt and Carolee Carter at the Dixie 2016 Show.

The Best in Show/Best Standard was my 'Buckeye Seductress' that flew all the way from Miami Beach. Debbie McInnis had the 2nd Best in Show/Best Semi with 'Rob's Combustible Pigeon' while Beverly Williams had the 3rd Best in Show/Best Species with '*S. schumensis* Mather EE.' The theme of the show was "Violets Travel the World" and we did, 1042 miles to be exact. But it was well worth it, because there is nothing like a violet show. I recommend everyone attend every show that you can and experience first-hand all the wonderful activities, beautiful plants, and the special people that make it truly a wonderful hobby. See you in Orlando!



Photo 3. Top Left: Paul Kroll, Karen Cichocki and Mel Grice. Middle Left: Debbie McInnis with Buckeye Tea Party. Lower Left: Sharon Gartner, Paul Kroll and Pat Hancock. Top Right: Buckeye Seductress, BIS/Best Standard. Bottom Right: Marie Burns and I sharing a hug!



Visit the AVSA'S Website:
www.avsa.org



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Mac's Elegant Emerald

Exhibited by: Beverley Williams

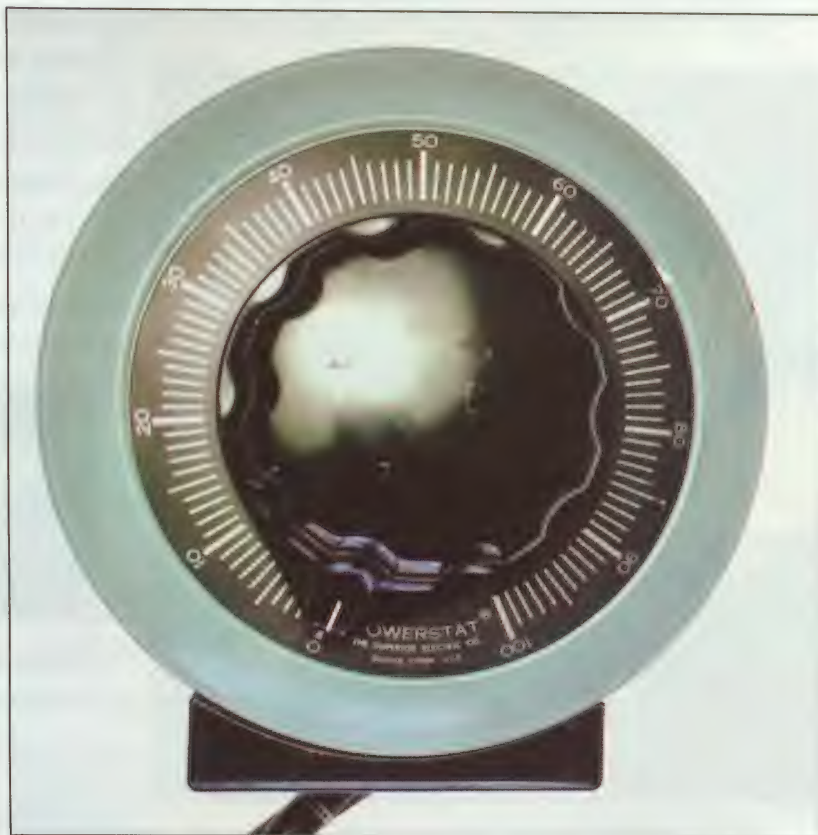
Hybridized by: G. MacDonald

Semiminiature

How to “Dial in” the Variegation You Want

Too much Green or too much White? Secrets revealed!

By Neil Lipson



This is my “Flowerstat.”

At the Orlando National Convention, I heard Steve Gonzalez give an EXCELLENT presentation on Water Quality and Fertilization for African violets. It was REALLY good, but REALLY technical. I loved that. A few people sitting near me asked “Neil, do you understand this?” I replied, “yes, but barely.” I thought about what Steve said, that most people ‘over-fertilize.’ That was a wakeup call for me. Was it too much nitrogen, phosphorus, or potassium, that was causing problems? It was NITROGEN!

Four things affect variegation: nitrogen, humidity, pH, and temperature. However, regardless of their differences, they are all tied together.

I noticed that when I switched to a bloom booster fertilizer for my show, the variegation

appeared on my variegates. How strange. My ‘Ann’ (Betty Bryant hybrid) and ‘Fool’s Gold’ (C. Phillips hybrid) changed during that period and actually looked much better (the variegation was present as in the description). What was going on?

I was growing ‘Fool’s Gold,’ which has “Cack-amus” foliage, on 14-12-14 fertilizer. It’s almost impossible to buy this beautiful violet because of its very slow growth habit. Another “problem” is that ‘Fool’s Gold’ is super sensitive to the nitrogen in the fertilizer. Too little and it turned white (actually yellow). Too much, and it turned solid green.

This was the only violet I have seen that was this fussy over the nitrogen. I call ‘Fool’s Gold’ the canary in the “gold” mine. This photo was taken on May 18th a week AFTER I stopped the fertilizer:



FOOL'S GOLD
MAY 18

What I noticed on close inspection, that the baby leaves were white. I assumed they would turn green, but they didn't. They stayed all white! This next photo was taken on June 5th. HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?

come to life when placed under domes. Even though the dome reduced the light by about 25%, the variegation soon began to emerge. Why? Because the high humidity slowed down the need to water (with fertilizer), which meant that they were receiving less nitrogen than if they had remained on the shelves. Once the variegation became true to the variety, I returned the plant to the shelf and watered them with my fertilizer solution, correcting

the dosage by reducing the amount of my 14-12-14 fertilizer from 1/8th teaspoon per gallon, to 1/16th.

The last photo, June 19, shows the center leaves are approaching good variegated as is shown:



FOOL'S GOLD JUNE 5

It looked like nitrogen was the key in variegation. I couldn't continue growing the plant with white leaves as it would not deliver any essential elements to keep the plant healthy (lack of chlorophyll), so I used Foliage Pro, which has heavy nitrogen content. This photo is taken June 15:

Notice the 2nd and 3rd row of leaves that were white are turning green, as well as those that have started emerging in the center.

Does anything else factor into this equation? What about humidity? I have had some of my variegated violets that were way too green and not showing much variegation,



FOOL'S GOLD
JUNE 15



These 'Ann' plants that I grew showed very little variegation, and it was because of the excessive nitrogen.

Can all of this be adjusted for a show plant? Yes, and here is 'Rose Bouquet' grown by a Master Grower, Carolee Carter, which is an excellent example of nailing the variegation for a show:



To illustrate my point: My other favorite "research" violet for variegation is Betty Bryant's 'Ann.' Here is a photo of the leaves I received a few years ago:

However, once I got babies, the plant was more of a solid green, and at that time I had no idea why:



Here's another variable: does temperature enter into this discussion? Yes indeed. The cooler the temperatures are, the less of the bacteria there is in the soil and therefore, the soil releases less nitrogen.

Of course you can correct this by putting less nitrogen fertilizer in your soil, so you're not forced to play with the plant's temperature.

And last - How does pH affect variegation?

When the pH is not in the right range, you get FERTILIZER LOCKUP. The soil will only release the fertilizer when the pH is in a certain range, so it is



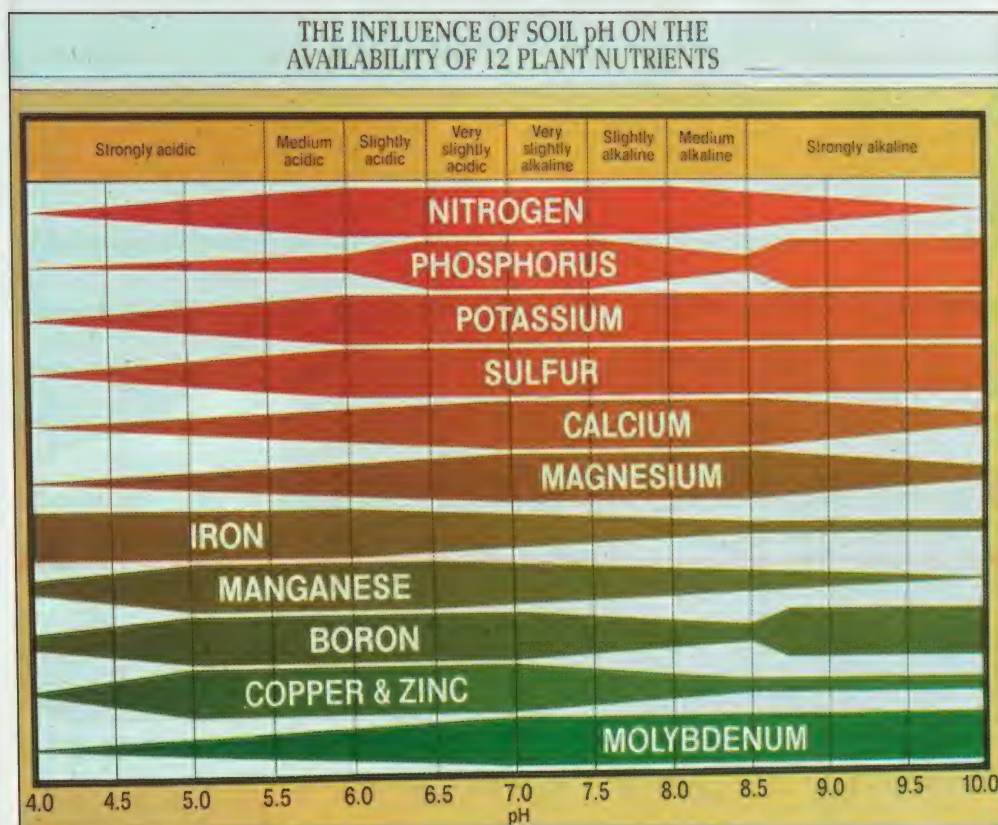
will have to do some R&D on.

I would like to thank Joyce Stork for her article in the September/October 1992 issue of

useful to refer to this chart:

Now, here's the kicker: the fertilizer and trace element requirements are slightly different for each element. It does, however, fall around pH 6.5 for all of the elements.

As I discover more factors that affect variegation, I will do a follow-up article. I would advise to avoid excessive potassium. That is a matter I



AVM called "Life on the Edge . . . Growing Variegated African Violets," Steve Gonzalez for his help and excellent presentation on "Water Quality & Fertilizers - Effects on African Violets" at the AVSA Orlando National Convention, and to Carolee Carter for her technical help and proofing this article.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.





Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

S.8 clone Cha Simba

Exhibited by: Carolee Carter

Why I Don't Grow for Show

By Eve Welts

During the years I have been an African violet club member, I went from growing beautifully loaded-with-blossoms Optimaras with little effort, to needing a commitment to my violets equal to a full time job. I learned about 'real' African violets, hybrids, and violets needing TLC as never before required of me, even from my family. I used to irrigate with tap water, knew nothing about fancy soil or infestations (other than the once in twenty years of growing, when a family member wintered some of my plants). They were returned to me infested with mealy bugs. It broke my heart to have to throw away plants I had nurtured for many years. I mourned them as some pet owners do at the loss of a furry friend.

I felt as though I was letting the club down by not 'showing', but quickly learned some others felt as I, but don't have my 'big mouth' and were quiet about it. I learned that members enjoy showing for many healthy reasons, but I just don't happen to be one of them. I do not strive for perfection, but am happy with 'good enough' as long as I see blossoms.

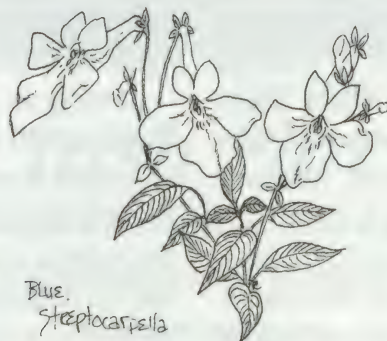
I cared for each of my plants (I have many varieties other than violets) as some care about pets, only plants die quietly, do not smell badly, do not have to be dragged out in the cold or dawn to be pooper scooped, and can be replaced more easily with a leaf from a friend's plant to start a new generation.

At our yearly competition and show, I often guarded club plants from children and viewers who wanted to feel the leaves (and pick some off) and were totally unaware that 'no touching' meant it

might cost the owner months of work lost if the plant was mishandled. I heard tales of the difficulty a show plant went through for three days with new conditions other than it being raised. The plant entered might not resemble the plant to take home after three show days. For those growers, for whom that plant was one of many of the same variety, with no emotional attachment, it is of little consequence. To me, it is a violation of a beautiful friend!

Since leaders of the clubs are often primarily invested in showing, I wonder if its appeal is lessened for the few who might make more effort to join if they felt less intimidated by the 'Show-ers'. Realizing the investment both in time and finances to those who grow to show; the racks, the indoor lighting, the special care required of hybrids (because the picture of them are so tempting and deceptive), the 'right' conditions for different varieties, the time required to the exclusion of those of us with limited time, dedication, or energy. I had a rack and lights and killed more plants than ever before, never knowing whether it was my lack of proper care, lack of knowledge and sometimes finding they were killed by infection. I went back to window-growing and have had much more success, to my great satisfaction. I will always remain grateful to the club member-tutors who, despite my perhaps sounding otherwise, enhanced my enjoyment of growing violets and introduced me to Streps and Episcias.

From *Ye Bay Stater*,
Publication of the Bay State AVS



Learning from Some of the Best

By Barbara Werness

I have grown African violets since high school because my mom did and because they were so pretty. My sister had been growing African Violets for show for several years and encouraged me to do the same. The first AV show I attended was in 1990 and I immediately joined the AV Society of MN. Two weeks later the North Star AV Council held their show and I immediately join that club, too. Shortly thereafter, joining AVSA was a given.

My reason for joining a club and entering shows was to have an outlet for the many AVs I started and wanted to sell. Heavens knew growing the beautiful specimens that graced the awards table was way beyond my dreams. After a few shows, growing for sale quickly became an afterthought. Growing for show was my goal. The realization that I could do it even lead me to the awards table many times.

Okay, so I was growing for show and still growing some for sale; but what's next? When you're fortunate enough to be a member of two clubs where you have the privilege of knowing Ruth Bann, Dolores Harrington and Don Ness, hybridizing sounds pretty enticing. When I think of Rebel's Splatter Kake, there is Ruth; Rosie Ruffles, there is Dolores; Ness' Crinkle Blue, there is Don.

Don Ness: I never got to know Don all that well. He and his wife Jean were both AVSM members. Since I worked full time and did not drive, getting to daytime meetings was just about impossible. Basically I knew Jean more through going to shows and then meetings after I retired.

Everyone spoke highly of Don and his constant endeavor to find "something new - something better". His goal was to come up with the next unique, beautiful, "I've got to have it" African violet. We had a meeting at their house many years ago and seeing their plant room with new varieties and the perfectly manicured AVs was breathtaking.

There are 212 Ness' varieties in First Class; 115 are registered. Most of them are standards. Sadly Don passed away in 2002. I still see Jean at

shows and meetings; she is a great person to be with and someone who always brings a smile to your face.

Dolores Harrington: Dolores was one of the sweetest and most gentle persons I have ever known. I remember the first time my African violet was on the awards table. Yes, it was Rosie Ruffles. I was beaming. But guess who was standing next to me while the judges made their final selection - sweet Dolores who was just as proud and excited as I. After standing there with fingers crossed and holding our breath, we both exhaled and hugged as Rosie Ruffles received the Tricolor.

My sister Pat and I visited Dolores' plant room a couple times. Walking down those narrow steep stairs to her basement was a bit disconcerting. Believe me, it was well worth it; rows and rows of shelves with her beautiful new and established AV hybrids. Did she have a specific goal in mind when making a cross? Maybe, but more than likely it was just to come up with something beautiful. We always went home with a nice selection.

There are 70 Harrington varieties in First Class; 65 are registered, mostly standards. Dolores died a few years ago. She is truly missed and we speak of her often at meetings.

Ruth Bann: YEAH! Ruth is still with us. She is not as active as she used to be with entering show plants and judging. She does still come to the shows to say "hi" and maybe sell a few African violets. I must say that Ruth Bann was definitely the motivation for my involvement in hybridizing. She was an encyclopedia of knowledge and a wonderful mentor. Crosses didn't always take and there were often disappointments; but her encouragement kept me going and was rewarding.

Getting to see Ruth's plant room was quite a challenge. In all the years I've known her I have only seen it once. Ruth hybridized some beauties. Don't know if it was her specific goal; but most of the Rebel's could grow quite large. Even the ones she did not register were absolutely beautiful specimens. As a club project she even shared some of

the babies produced from crosses. How exciting it was to grow them out.

There are 100 Bann varieties in First Class; 81 are registered, just about all standards. I can count Ruth as one of my very good friends in years past. I miss the days we went to meetings together and the many hours spent at the shows. But I will always remember Ruth Bann as a very special person.

Thank you Don, Dolores and Ruth for being a part of my personal AV experience and for giving so much of yourselves to the African violet world.

But let's not forget the newbies.

Joan Baker: Joan is very new to the hybridizing world. She used be a member of the NSAVC; but since she lives 300 miles north of the Twin Cities, getting to meetings was a bit of an ordeal. She has attended a couple of our shows and we keep in touch through social media and emails. Wished she lived closer; we could be great friends and conspirators in the AV world. I've seen pictures of some of her up and coming seedlings and they

definitely fit well into the "wow" category.

Currently there are only a handful of J. Baker varieties in First Class. Joan is also a successful eBay seller and I am sure we will be seeing many of her beauties posted in the next few years.

Barbara Werness: I know me quite well. As mentioned above, my inspiration was from three great hybridizers. The hybridizing bug bit in the late 90s. Mostly it started with a couple sports, then Ruth's shared seedlings, then with my own crosses. There was a several year hiatus in hybridizing after a family situation, but now I'm excited to be working at it again. Right now there are a few happy little seed pods just plumping up and waiting for their opportunity to produce new Sora plants. One of my goals is the ever elusive orange blossom. It may happen someday, but...

Only 21 Werness varieties are listed in First Class; 16 are registered. I am very optimistic that in the next few years the amount of Sora African violets will increase substantially. Wish me luck.



Photo Credit: Paula Bal

Irish Flirt

Exhibited and Photographed by: Paula Bal

Hybridizer: S. Sorano

Semiminiature



Photo Credit: Erika Geimonen

Morgan's Declan Duff

Hybridized by: C. Eros

Miniature



Photo Credit: Erika Geimonen

Rebel's Splatter Kake

Hybridized by: R. Bann

Large

Another Observation on LED Lighting

By Bruce Pearson

Tropical World Nursery

Loxahatchee Groves, FL

Email: TropicalWrld@gmail.com

LED lighting for my violets in South Florida, I have found to be equal if not superior, to fluorescent lighting.

Let me state that I am certainly not a lighting engineer, but have degrees in biology and ornamental horticulture. I have been in the nursery business since 1962 and grown plants since I was 6 or 7.

I have grown violets under both fluorescent and LED lighting for a little over 3 years, and certainly not an expert. We grow not for show but for our garden center and Internet sales. The following are facts and observations I have made.

There are a number of types of LED. I use mostly 48" aquarium lights with red, white, green, and blue bulbs. They have three rows of parallel lights in the unit. Interestingly, I have some with only blue and white, and see little difference, if any, in growth habit. With LED lighting being able to support coral growth in aquariums, I feel the technology there is certainly enough to support African violet growth.

Although I really have no interest in "growing for show," I am sure LED grown plants from us would qualify for blue ribbon status, and if time and effort were taken to produce a "Best in Show," I would guess our LED- produced plants would win out over our fluorescents.

Long time experienced, Best in Show winning growers have necessarily started with fluorescents and have learned to grow under them. So they have little need to fix what is not broken, but I bet in the near future, with new hobbyists coming on, the majority of Best in Shows will be from LED fixtures, and fluorescent lighting will take a distant back seat.

To be fair, we have only one Flora-cart unit with

fluorescent bulbs, and these bulbs are older than a year, probably three to five years. I find that although the plants appear the same from casual observation, on our LED lit violets (over 100 strips), the root system is superior.

About half of our LED lighted violets receive some natural sunlight. The other half is strictly LED. Timers go off during periods of bright sunlight during the afternoon when they receive good light from the sun, and then set to come back on in late afternoon and into the evening. Those not benefiting from natural light get between twelve and fourteen hours of LED light.

Members of our local violet club are amazed at the growth, size of leaves and plants, as well as quantity and size of flowers that we are growing. Our miniature and semiminatures are almost always covered in blooms. Although LED plant lights are a bit more expensive (the 48" ones are between \$45 and \$70) than fluorescents, they rapidly pay for themselves in electricity, and cost of fluorescent bulbs, and ballast replacement. With well over 100 light strips in total, I see no difference in our electric bill. In fact it has gone down since replacing our pool pump with a variable speed pump, all the while adding more lights.

They produce little to no heat, a plus when air conditioning is needed almost year round in South Florida.

They are lightweight, and super easy for an individual to mount on stands, using only plastic pull ties.

They are much more attractive than bulky fluorescents.

Many more LED lights can be plugged into an individual circuit, as compared with fluorescent.

There are no bulbs to change and danger of breakage is non-existent.

In a recent article mentioning the LED lighting at Bird Tropicals in Kansas city, I observed the same phenomenon but with a different conclusion. We went early to Mr. Bird's establishment, which is conducted in a cave. My main interest for years has been orchids, but I could not imagine that he could compete with South Florida orchid growers! I could really not imagine he would have much, and mainly wanted to go to see his Pembroke Welsh Corgies. He has two Corgies and we had ten, at the time, now down to seven. Corgie people have a special bond and we were old friends by the time the big African violet group arrived.

Walking into the cave I was spellbound with the varieties he was able to grow under LED lighting, and in Kansas no less! I know firsthand how much harder it is to grow plants in the Plains as compared to South Florida. Not only did he have many species that I had never heard of, but genera beyond my knowledge. He had even received a prestigious FCC award on an orchid, something rarely given out.

I was in awe of his collection. Trying to photograph it was another story. I got the same result as

Mr. Lipson's photo in the March - April 2017 issue of the AVM. I played around with the white balance on my Canon T3I with little improvement. I asked several other photographers in the group, but they too were having the same result. My conclusion is the information the cameras were receiving were of a photographic issue, and not a lighting issue, as his plants were beautiful.

I see this same phenomenon in trying to take pictures of LED lit plants on stands with my own set-up. Having little patience to manipulate the camera settings, I simply take the plants out from under the LED and photograph under natural lighting, which my camera has settings for. The pictures are radically different. It is simply the way the camera is set to read the type of light. I do not think most cameras have a white balance setting for LED, and this has nothing to do with use of LED in plant growth.

In short, I love LED and the African violet plants it produces. At least give it a try! But be sure and get those that are for **plants or aquariums!**

There are many more choices than with fluorescent. I see where some big growers in California are switching to LED. The technology is here, but eventually, will be "ever-changing."

Lonestar Helen Mahr

*Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by:
R. Nicholas
Standard*



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

Just when you think you have found everything there is to find about African violets on the web, something new pops up. Etsy is the topic of this column today. Etsy was originally founded as an on-line marketplace for hand-made goods. Wikipedia describes it as a "peer-to-peer commerce website, focused on handmade or vintage items, as well as unique factory manufactured items." At the end of 2014, there were 1.4 million sellers on Etsy.

The site is very easy to use. Simply Google the name Etsy, and it pops right up. The search feature is very easy to use, and typing in the words, "African violet" brought up a wealth of treasures.

On the day I accessed this site, 1,028 African violet-related craft supplies and tools popped up. Home and living had 753 options, jewelry 293, art and collectibles 198, and the accessories category had 70 entries.

A shop named Gabby Abby Crafts offered small crocheted flowers for sale at the rate of four for \$1.00. Another shop, Very Big Jen, had African violet bottle cap pincushions. These were cute! At 2.25" tall, they were made of recycled soda bottle caps covered in felt. "The flower pots contained felt leaves and flowers. This useful little product was priced at \$12.

Gubba Gumma took me back to 1993. They offered vintage, unused postage stamps. The stamps featured a magenta colored African violet. 20 stamps were priced at \$12.

Tany Nogueira was selling watercolor, hand-painted clip art. An instant download of four images was priced at \$5. These were very pretty and well done.

Demonstrating that there is no end to craft creativity, Mermaid Dreams Jewelry offered a beautiful necklace. The focal point was a woven bead 1.5 by 1.5-inch flower. The purple and white flower did not require any imagination to know exactly what it represented.

While there are many opportunities to buy



pre-made items based around the African violet theme, there are also opportunities for crafty people to order patterns and make their own. A shop called Noah's lady 4 Patterns offered a quilt block kit with a 3D African violet theme.

Happy Patty Crochet offered a pattern and instructions for crocheting an African violet plant in bloom. The crafter gets the pattern via instant download after paying the \$5 fee. Colors and thread selection are left up to the person making the plant. The photos showed beautiful, realistic plants. These could be an excellent idea for door prizes or even club fundraisers. Chiang Mai, of Thailand who owns the shop also offers patterns for lilies, roses, and other flowers as well.

Another flower kit seller was The Miniature Gardener, from Lewes, United Kingdom. This seller had 1:12 scale paper flower kits. The materials made three small-scale plants in bloom. Pots were not included. Suggested uses for these tiny African violets included models and dollhouses. Again, this seller had other flowering plant kits available, also.

Yes, one can even buy the real thing on Etsy. Take A Compliment was offering a young, rooted Optimara North Carolina II for \$9.99. She had other African violets and *Streptocarpus* available from \$14.99 up.

The disadvantage to buying from an Etsy shop is that the merchandise changes on a daily basis. Many of the items are one of a kind, and once they are sold they will not be offered again. However, many of the shop owners will custom make items, too.

You must create an account to purchase items on Etsy. Essentially, you are purchasing from an individual, while Etsy just acts as the clearing house for ordering. The individual ships their product to you. Creating an account is an easy process from the moment you click on the "Register" tab to do so.

All forms of payment, with the exception of

cash or check can be used on Etsy. In addition to their own issue gift cards, sellers take credit and debit cards, Apple Pay and PayPal. Overseas buyers may be able to use bank transfers to pay for

items. Again, checkout is very easy, and similar to any other online commerce site.

If you want unique, Etsy is the place to find it! www.etsy.com



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Peach Brandy

Best Vintage Violet

Exhibited by: Kurt Jablonski

Hybridized by: L Lyon Greenhouses

Standard

MINUTES ANNUAL MEETING AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

June 3, 2017 • Orlando, Florida

The Annual Business Meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc. was called to order by Third Vice President, Susan Anderson, at 3:17 p.m. in Salon H and Salon I of the Wyndham Orlando Resort International Drive, Orlando, Florida. The invocation was given by Laurene Jones and followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag led by Susan Anderson. Susan Anderson introduced members of the African Violet Society of America Executive Committee and presented the President, Winston Goretsky.

Mary Corondan, Secretary, reported a quorum was present. She then read the Standing Rules for the Annual Meeting, and they were adopted.

President Goretsky appointed Candace Baldwin, Chair; Penny Smith-Kerker; and Carol Semrau to serve as the Committee to approve the 2017 minutes.

Debbie McInnis was appointed Timekeeper. Mrs. McInnis will give a verbal signal after two minutes.

President Goretsky appointed Anne Nicholas, Chair; Paula Bal and Cindi Nofziger as Tellers.

Susan Hill reported that the 2016 minutes of the Annual Business Meeting were approved.

Laurene Jones, Resolution Chair, presented the Courtesy Resolution, which is attached.

Cindi Nofziger, Nominating Committee Chair, reported. The Nominating Committee submitted the following to serve as Directors until the conclusion of the 2020 Annual Meeting.

Sallie Barlow, Louisiana

Linda Ingle, Oregon

Linda Kilby, Pennsylvania

Sandy McIntosh, Kentucky

Renee Wilson, California

No nominations were received from the floor. The directors were elected by voice vote.

Cindi Nofziger further reported the submission of the following Officers to serve until the conclusion of the 2019 Annual Meeting:

President, Dr. Richard Nicholas

First Vice President, Sue Ramser

Second Vice President, Susan Anderson

Third Vice President, Edna Rourke

Secretary, Mary Corondan

Treasurer, Terri Post

No nominations were received from the floor, and the officers were elected by voice vote.

President Goretsky announced that the installation of the directors and officers would take place at the installation banquet that evening.

President Goretsky recognized the retiring Directors.

Paula Bal

Diane Miller

BJ Ohme

Linda Rowe

Steve Turner Glenda Williams

The retiring Committee Chairs were recognized by President Goretsky.

John Carter, Technology and Tinari Fund
Advancement

Mel Grice, Affiliate Committee

Linda Hall, Convention Show Awards

Cindi Nofziger, Nominating Committee

Janet Riemer, Open Forum

President Goretsky announced that Judy Niemira and Julie Thompson will serve as Convention Chairs for the 2018 Convention in Buffalo. Paul Kroll extended the invitation to the 2018 Convention in Buffalo, New York, to be held May 20-27.

In the absence of Joyce Stork, Membership and Promotion Chair, Maureen Pratt presented the Annual Membership Rebates. This year the Membership Rebates were presented to Violet Barn with 23 new AVSA members and Pat Hancock with 10 new AVSA members.

President Goretsky stated that Maureen Pratt would be replacing Linda Rowe as a director for the

next two years. The Executive Committee in consultation with the Nominating Committee presented Maureen Pratt to fill the position. She was voted upon by the Board of Directors. President Goretsky welcomed Maureen Pratt to the Board.

Sue Hoffmann stated there were two bags of plants left on sales tables. One was on the Violet Barn sales table, and the other was left behind Pat Hancock's sales table.

Laurene Jones, Resolutions Chair, read a list of deceased members from this past year. The list is attached to these minutes. The following names were added: Ann Wang, California; Kathleen Dickman, Illinois; and Ramona Hodges, Alabama.

President Goretsky stated a card of special thanks was received from Joyce Stork in appreciation for the calls and cards received upon the death of Kent Stork.

Winston Goretsky announced there would be no Sunday Board Meeting.

Sue Hoffman stated Lyndon Lyon has donated two plants to give away. Winston Goretsky awarded the plants.

Lynne Wilson expressed a special thanks to Pat Hancock for the idea of the contest of articles submitted for the African Violet Magazine.

As there was no further business to come before the 2017 Annual Meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

Mary Corondan, Secretary

COMMITTEE TO APPROVE:

Candace Baldwin, Chair

Penny Smith-Kerker

Carol Semrau

***Cajun's
Zydeco***
*Exhibited and
Hybridized by:
Belinda Thibodeaux
Large*



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Transplanting Our Violets

By Bill Price

Regarding transplanting of our violets, while most experienced growers develop their own preferred strategies/formulas with some variation, I will describe what I believe are fairly standard recommendations.

What I describe applies to all violet types, standard, semiminiature, miniature, trailers, and species. I will comment as to their different requirements where they are relevant.

Most hobby growers acquire their new plants as 'starters', young plants grown in small pots such as Solo cups or perhaps 2 1/2" or 3" pots. Once settled into their new home (and of course, after being quarantined), I would suggest you gently 'unpot' (hold the plant in place with your fingers while turning the pot upside down so that the root ball slides out), the plant to assess the root development. When you see several roots growing around the outer surface of the rootball, it is time to transplant this plant to a larger pot ("up-potting").

If the plant is left too long in the small pot, you will see the roots matted on the outer surface of the rootball (root bound) - before transplanting, make several 1/4" deep, vertical cuts into the rootball - this will facilitate new roots developing sooner into the new mix.

It is advisable to select a pot that is no more than 1" larger in diameter and to use a technique called 'mold potting' where the previous smaller pot is held inside the newer pot while fresh mix is filled into the space between the old and new pot. Once the mix is in place, the old pot is carefully removed, leaving a 'mold' into which the plant is gently placed, watered in and replaced in the growing area.

It is important to water the newly transplanted plants sparingly at first as at this time, they are more vulnerable to root rot from being too wet. As their roots grow into the new mix, you will see evidence of new growth.

As the plant grows, this technique of up potting needs to be repeated until it gets to the size that

best suits the particular plant variety or that the grower prefers. For example, most standard plants ultimately will need at least a 4" pot as they reach maturity. For reasons of space or just preference, many growers decide to keep them at this level. However, for those wishing to maximize their plant's potential such as for shows, up potting to 5", 6" or even 7" pots may be necessary.

Once your plant is in the maximum sized pot that you have decided upon, further transplanting takes a slightly different turn. When the next transplanting is due, for example, when the plant has developed a 'neck' of exposed stem above the surface of the mix, the grower has a couple options.

One, is to restart the plant from leaves or crown cuttings and the other is down potting into the same sized pot:

First estimate the length of exposed neck and gently scrape off the old scaly surface of the exposed stem. (this facilitates new root development from the stem surface after repotting). Then carefully unpot the plant and also remove several rows of lower leaves.

Now, here comes the fun part! As the plant is being repotted into its former pot, you must remove (slice off) some of the bottom mix so that the plant will fit back into its pot without any neck showing. So, for example, if there is say, 1" of neck exposed, you will need to slice about 1" off the bottom of the mix. (I would also advise making several vertical cuts in the rootball surface as described above before replacing it in the pot). Then, when the plant is replaced into the pot, it will be sitting 1" lower. Now, you fill up the pot with fresh mix around the neck so that when done, there is no exposed neck.

And again, as after all transplanting, keep an eye on the plant and spare the water until new growth is evident.

Now for *miniature and semi miniature plants*: All the principles of transplanting apply

with the following provisos/variations. These plants are customarily grown in pots no larger than 2 1/4" - 2 1/2". This means that most varieties are potted in their 'final' pot size right from the start, or very soon thereafter. Consequently, down potting or restarting from leaf or crown cuttings, is used more often.

Trailers are another story! Container size, and size of the particular trailer variety are up to the grower, (and for shows, are judged on *form* rather than *symmetry*). Trailers, of course, must be potted as single plants. Except at the early stages, transplanting trailers can be very challenging, with their different growth styles, such as long internodes (and vining) or shorter internodes (and more compact habit), growers have several options when considering transplanting

When grown in the Japanese style, with the longer stems growing on the mix surface, 'transplanting' or refreshing the mix of larger plants, may mean very gently removing some of the old mix from the sides or bottom of the (usually) shallow pot or pan, and carefully replacing it with fresh mix. Younger plants may be up-potted, using the mold pot technique as described above.

When dealing with transplanting more upright

growing vining types, that tend to 'fall open' as they grow, some growers elect to pot them more deeply in a larger pot, filling in the pot with fresh mix. This may appear erroneously, as if several plants are in the pot when it is in fact only one.

Transplanting the more compact-growing trailers is best accomplished also by mold potting. This is a good time as well to make sure the crowns are spaced as symmetrically as possible. If some realignment is required, after the plant is set into the new pot, I would recommend using narrow wooden shishkabob type skewers to hold the crowns in position for a couple weeks, after which they can be removed.

And finally, when considering the species, their transplanting needs are the same as their particular type, ie: standard growing species as other standards, trailing species as trailers, etc. Keep in mind that species are judged as '*naturally grown or wild plants as found in nature*,' which means for example, that having multiple crowns or a 'neck' is not penalized as it would be with hybrids.

In conclusion, I hope these suggestions will be helpful as you take on the not-so-daunting task of transplanting your violets. Your plants will thrive and you will love the results Good growing!

Buckeye Scrumptious

Exhibited by:

Debbie McInnis

Hybridized by:

P. Hancock

Large



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Smaller Leaves Under Big Leaves: Sayonara

By Kurt Jablonski

At this year's convention I admired all the lovely show plants that lined the tables in the showroom. What a magnificent sight! A sea of African violets in their crowning glory, full of blossoms and perfect foliage. Or so I thought? From a distance everything looked perfect. But upon closer inspection I was surprised to see lots of smaller leaves under big leaves on many plants. I wondered why these exhibitors did not remove these leaves. It almost seems that some regions of the country ignore this problem altogether. Smaller leaves under bigger leaves DESTROY the symmetry of your plant no matter where you live. Not to mention they add nothing to the overall plant except for an eyesore. Any leaf that is smaller than the leaf above it should be removed during regular grooming of the plant.

Naturally as a plant grows, it has a 3-leaf pattern. These three leaves form triangles. Eventually these triangles overlap one another to form a round, symmetrical plant. For that reason it is important to take off the bottom three leaves every time you repot. You will be surprised at how quickly the plant will grow into a round specimen if you keep up with your grooming and removing those bottom three leaves. Repotting should be done every 3 months when growing for show, using the mold-potting method. Unfortunately I think many growers don't use this method and in turn their plants have alternate rows of large and small leaves. This is because they totally disturbed the roots when they repotted. This applies to all sizes of African violets. Once you are at a show there is nothing you can do about these leaves.

Smaller leaves develop for a few reasons. Many times they occur when the grower uses different fertilizers. Switching between high nitrogen and low nitrogen fertilizers or not fertilizing at all has an affect on the size of the plant leaves. So it is imperative to maintain consistent growing practices to eliminate the chance of these smaller leaves developing.

Secondly when repotting, using the mold potting method is best because there is less disturbance to the rootball and the plant has an easier recovery.

Over the years, judges seem to be harder on standard plants that have smaller leaves under big leaves than they have with little ones. The reason is that on a mini or semimini plant the difference between a large leaf and a small leaf is not as great as on a standard and it is HARDER to see it. But for each instance on any size violet one point can be deducted under condition when the plants are judged. Unfortunately, I think our judges are either too lenient or might not understand themselves, the severity of this issue.

Shockingly, I have been told by several growers that as long as the smaller leaves under the larger leaves stick out farther than the bigger leaves above them there is no reason to take them off. NOT TRUE. Any leaf that is smaller than the leaf above it MUST be taken off. The only exception to this rule would be if by removing that smaller leaf you then have a gap (up to 3 point deduction), then I would leave it on and take the 1 point loss. There is nothing worse than seeing a beautiful African violet that was almost perfect except for a few smaller leaves under larger leaves.

I think that sometimes when life gets in the way of caring for our violets we don't see the plants as they truly are; flaws and all. You must inspect your plants all the time and work with them everyday if you want to have a perfect plant. There are no points for extra leaves on a plant. Perfection is awarded. And believe me when I say this, if you can put a plant into a show with excellent symmetry, clean foliage, lots of blooms and no smaller leaves under big leaves the judges will not be able to deduct many, if any, points from your plant and you'll be amazed when you see your plant sitting on the court of honor!

Cajun's Freckleface Kid

*Exhibited and
Hybridized by:
Belinda Thibodeaux*



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

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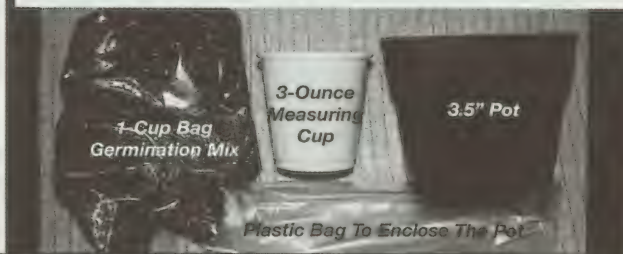
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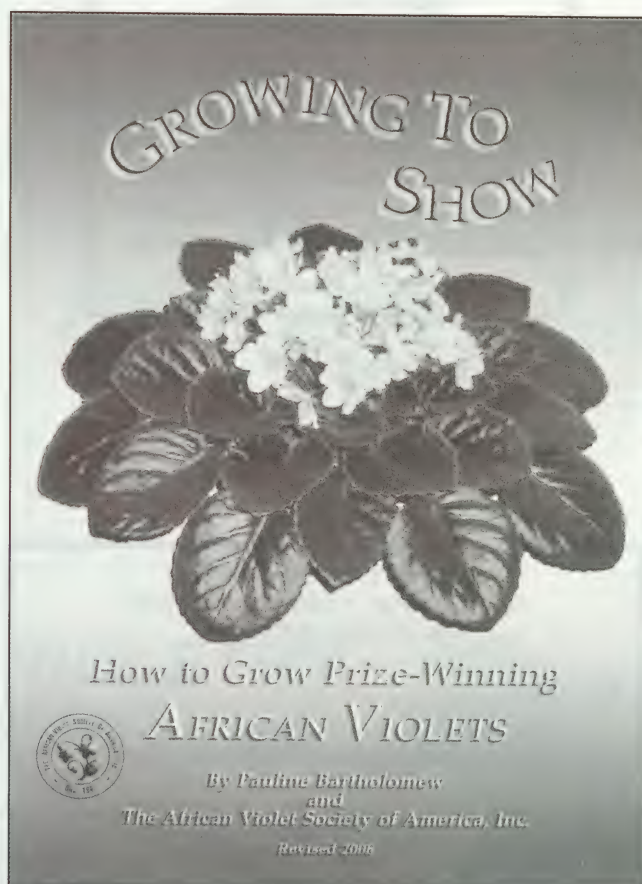
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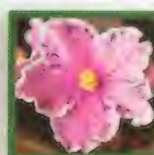
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On this Cover:

Buckeye Vavoom

Exhibited by: **Debbie McInnis**

Hybridized by: **P. Hancock**

Photo Credit: **Winston J. Goretsky**

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Richard Nicholas, President

3113 Deerfield Dr. • Denton, TX 76208

Email: randanicho@aol.com

AVSA Friends:

As I write this column, we are now in the middle of the summer! Where does the time go? Our state show, the Lone Star AVC show, is in the fall, so this is repotting time for those of us who want to enter standards. This is also the time I again begin to think I have too many plants. I usually vow to reduce the collection, but somehow that just doesn't happen. Surely I am not the only one?

AVSA business continues to get ready for the new year. All committee chairs are appointed and work is underway. As part of our plans, each committee is reviewing its work, appointing a vice chair, and many are planning to expand to more members. This possibility brings up a topic that I mentioned in the last issue: volunteers. We are an organization that functions almost entirely with volunteer work. Of course, that means we always need more volunteers! AVSA needs more volunteers for committees, including those related to conventions, and for leadership positions. If you have thought about applying for the Board of



Directors, or if you know someone who would be a good candidate, now is the time. Don't be afraid to speak up. Just like our local clubs, getting involved with other growers just makes everything about the hobby more fun.

Research articles continue to show that people with hobbies are generally happier and consistently live longer. Our AVSA members know that! Our plants offer a calming activity to relieve stress. Our shows are just fun. It doesn't matter whether you bring and show plants or just come to be involved, shows are fun. When show-goers are asked, being with our violet friends is always a top reason to attend.

We just need some more members. Susan Anderson and Candace Baldwin, both amazing leaders from Arizona, have developed materials to help with the formation of new clubs. Contact them if you know of a city or an area in need of a club. Soon you will hear more about a challenge – a challenge for more of our affiliate clubs to reach 100% AVSA membership. More to come!

Remember, violets connect us!



Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

Hurricane Harvey was a nightmare to Southeast Texas. Many residents are still dealing with the damage to their homes and vehicles.

The flooding came overnight and every ditch and canal in this area was full. My yard, and all of our neighbor's yards were completely underwater, as were many streets, causing severe vehicle damage to those who attempted to drive through it. None of this was a surprise; we are at sea level. Amy sent me a photo of someone passing by her house in a kayak.

Our city water supply was contaminated by flood water filling the pumping stations, and on the second day, as Harvey still hung around drenching us, the city cut off all water to the residents, in the middle of the night, with no warning. This created a panic, and the next day, and for days after, citizens were crowding into the local stores, buying as much bottled water as possible. The next couple of days, the situation did not improve and desperate people were actually fighting each other outside the large grocery stores, over water. After first hearing the word 'hurricane', we stocked up on water and other supplies, long before Harvey arrived.

I made it to our office twice, when there was a lull in the rain. I've made that drive hundreds of times in the twenty plus years I've worked for AVSA, and know which streets flood and which



don't. The last time I was there, during the storm, my husband called and suggested I just bring everything home to work on, that the rain was going to increase tremendously in the afternoon. He was right.

The AVSA Office fared well, no leaks or flood water into the building. Our office was built on the pier and beam foundation, so it is off the ground, and above the flood water.

Thanks to our Contest creator, **Pat Hancock**, we are now looking forward to AVSA's 2018 Article Contest! As Editor, I have been so excited about the possibility of a file folder, full to the brim with more fine articles our members have written.

I have just discovered that I now have 24 violets and "other" gesneriads in my office windows. I have 2 huge Sinningias and three Episcias, all the same varieties, and in different locations, one on the top of my file cabinet, and another on the broken, laying on it's side, former shredder.

My personal favorite AV is 'Humako Inches.' It produces the most wonderful blossoms, which often are 3+inches across. The center of the blossom is a lovely dark purple, and the outer edge of petal is a bright white.

Happy Growing! Ruth

Ruth

AVSA Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Donations:

Please send all donations, including convention award donations, to the AVSA office.

You can also donate and find more information for each fund on our website. <http://avsa.org/donations>.

Please call or email

Amy Carruth, AVSA Manager, with any questions.

AVSA

2375 North Street
Beaumont, TX 77702
844-400-AVSA (2872)
avsa@earthlink.net

Deceased AVSA Members from the Past Year

At the 2017 AVSA Convention Laurene Jones, Resolutions Chair, read a list of deceased members from this past year.

The following names were added: **Ann Wang**, California; **Kathleen Dickman**, Illinois; and **Ramona Hodges**, Alabama.

President Goretsky stated a card of special thanks was received from Joyce Stork in appreciation for the calls and cards received upon the death of Kent Stork.

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses Dolgeville, NY

'Black Tie Affair' (10889) 05/13/2017
(D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)
Single-semidouble burgundy star/darker
eye, streaks, band, frilled white edge. Dark
green/red back. **Standard**

'Carnival Confetti' (10890) 05/13/2017
(D. Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)
Single-semidouble pink large star/blue fantasy,
wide pink-white edge. Medium green, quilted.
Standard

'Coming Up Roses' (10891) 05/13/2017 (D.
Lamphere/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Double
vivid pink star/frilled green edge. Dark green,
wavy/red back. **Large**

'Deadly Hit' (10892) 05/13/2017 (P. Sorano/
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble-double
purple star/raspberry band, frilled green edge.
Variegated dark green and ivory, quilted. **Large**



'Girls Night Out' (10893) 05/13/2017
(P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)
Double red star/white edge. Dark green,
quilted, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'Key Lime Treat' (10894) 05/13/2017
(P. Sorano/Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses)
Semidouble pink pansy. **Crown varie-**
gated medium green and yellow, plain.

Standard

'Lilliana' (10895) 05/13/2017 (P. Sorano/Lyn-
don Lyon Greenhouses) Double coral-pink frilled
star, lighter toward edges. Dark green/red back.
Standard

'Unsung Heroes' (10896) 05/13/2017 (P. Sorano/
Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses) Semidouble red frilled
pansy/thin white edge. Dark green, quilted/red
back. **Standard**

NAME RESERVATIONS

Donna McCormick – Owensburg, IN



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Primulina lutea

Best Other

Gesneriad - Commercial

Hybridized by:

Bobbi Johannsen

BOYCE EDENS RESEARCH FUND

Karen Broadway - Chairman • 10028 N. 58th Lane • Glendale, AZ 85302-1334

Donations received from May 1, 2017 – June 30, 2017 • Total = \$631.00



Geneva - \$100-\$499

Dr. Ken Stromborg, Denmark, WI

In Memory of Janet Stromborg

Pat & Bob Kelm, Montello, WI

In Memory of Janet Stromborg

Gary & Terri Mancoske, Denmark, WI

In Memory of Janet Stromborg

Ms. Carol Larsen, Denmark, WI

In Memory of Janet Stromborg

Mike & Debbie Sanders, Green Bay, WI

In Memory of Janet Stromborg



Multicolor - \$50-\$99

Richmond African Violet Society, Richmond, VA

In Memory of Glenna Hasslacher and

Mary Sue Hudson

African Violet Society of Philadelphia, PA

Claire Ulanoff, Nashville, TN

In Memory of Kent Stork



Two Tone - \$25-\$49

Quad Cities African Violet Society, Eldridge, IA

In Memory of Daniel Witt

Alice A. Inlow, Ballwin, MO

Oshkosh Violet Society, Oshkosh, WI

Karen Anderson, Delta, CO

In Memory of Betty Heintzelman

Susan E. Joy, Pickerington, OH



Thumbprint - Under \$25

Joan K. Wilson, Theresa, WI

Virginia Barthelemy, Tampa, FL

Victoria African Violet Society, Victoria, TX

Robert McMeel, Houma, LA

Judith Hess, Greendale, WI

Catherine O'Neil, Lynbrook, NY

Lynn Wallach, Hollywood, FL

Emilia Rykowski, Clifton, NJ

Joy Rohan, Gainesville, FL

Mary L. Vasconcelles, Springfield, IL

Jan Schindler, North Bend, NE

In Memory of Kent Stork

An African Violet Should Be Repotted Regularly

By Ruth Coulson

Why?

To keep the plant fresh and growing strongly. Repotting, if done correctly, works in the following ways:

It accommodates the increasing size of a growing plant until a pot of around (4 inches) across is reached.

It replaces compacted potting mix by repotting a mature plant into the same size pot with fresh mix. This should be done after removing old leaves and pruning the roots. It will make sure the plant can grow strongly. If the mix is hard and filled with roots, the plant will have a hard time taking up nutrients.

It will ensure that an old plant with a "neck" where leaves were removed as they declined during the life of the plant, is completely renovated. When an African violet has a "neck" the repotting is done so that the lowest leaves are around about the top of the mix once again.

It will avoid salt build-up on the top of the mix and the rim of the pot. This deposit can end up damaging the leaves and petioles that may rest on it.

In short there is nothing like regular repotting to stimulate an African violet to grow strongly and rapidly. Fast growth is usually healthy growth.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

LE-Erika

Exhibited by: William Price



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Harmony's Gundartoo

Exhibited by: Linda McQueen

The History of Buffalo, New York

*Location of the 2018 AVSA National Convention
Buffalo, New York*

Buffalo, NY is located on the eastern-most end of Lake Erie. For many years, the native people were alone. Then in 1620, French trappers and Jesuit clergy began to visit and trade with the Native citizens. In 1679, an explorer called Rene-Robert Cavelier; *sieur de La Salle* built a ship there.

By 1758, the French had established a trading post but the British burned it down, so the French left Buffalo. Things quieted down until in 1789 when an African man named Joe Hodges who had been trading with the natives decided to settle here. He married a Seneca maiden, became fluent enough in her language to be an interpreter, and built a tavern. Very soon afterward, in 1796 another man named Martin Middaugh also settled there. That was the beginning of Buffalo, NY! Meanwhile in other places land was being claimed, and sold to men called The Holland Land Company. In 1804 they sent a man named Joseph Ellicott, the architect of Washington D.C., to lay out an establishment. He designed a radial street and grid system that branched out from a central location. This was Buffalo as a village! Mr. Ellicott tried to name Buffalo New Amsterdam, but the city always was, and will always be, Buffalo.

Things moved slowly until the War of 1812. This time the British burned most of the buildings and captured many of the settlers whom they took to Montreal. But, Buffalo was rebuilt. They also built the first steamboat on the upper Great Lakes in 1818 and named it "Walk-on-the-Water."

In 1825 a structure known as "Clinton's Ditch," or The Grand Canal (aka The Erie Barge Canal) was completed, linking what they called the Hudson River and Lake Erie.

In 1832 Buffalo's charter as a city was approved, and with all the new business coming, it was called a "boomtown." During the 1830's the city saw it's first bank, railroad, and newspaper, and was the first city in New York State to see the

establishment of a Public School. A man named Benjamin Rathburn was responsible for building many of the buildings that still stand today. He built as many as 100 buildings in a year!

During the 1840's, Buffalo became the largest grain-handling port in the world due in no small part to the effort of a local man named Joseph Dart. Dart installed a steam-driven machine that transferred grain from a cargo ship to a storage silo. This meant ships could be unloaded in one day. Those grain elevators still stand today, and now there is a light show projected on them in the evening. Other notable achievements in the 1840's included the construction of the Macedonia Baptist Church, which was important to those attempting to end slavery. Buffalo became a terminus point of the Underground Railroad, helping those who were fugitive slaves escape to Fort Erie in Canada, the neighbor on the other side of Lake Erie.

In 1846 came the creation of the University of Buffalo and the appointment of a man named Millard Fillmore as its chancellor. He served in that position until his death in 1874. However, two years after his appointment at UB he became the Vice President of the United States! In 1850 the current President died and Millard Fillmore, one of Buffalo's own sons, became the President of this great nation. President Fillmore still has a hospital named after him. In 1847 the Pope created the Diocese of Buffalo, naming John Timon as the first Bishop. The first services were held at St. Louis Church - the first Catholic Church in Buffalo, and still standing. In 1848 came Buffalo's first hospital, Sister's Hospital, was opened by the Daughters of Charity of St Vincent de Paul. That hospital still serves Buffalo citizens today.

In the 1840's there were huge strides in the way people moved from place to place. Grain wasn't the only thing that traveled on the waters of the Great Lakes. Steamships took over 93,000 people a year to Chicago. Those passengers

enjoyed fine dining and ballroom dancing on floating palaces, for the three or four days it took to reach their destination.

Railroads were also becoming an important way for people to move around. Originally, they thought only people would use the railways but soon freight caught the eye of the people who ran the trains. This caused the government to impose strict rules on freight transport in an effort to protect the business on their canal. But between 1847 and 1849 new solid iron rails replaced the old and dangerous wooden rails. This was the beginning of the end of the huge water-borne passenger traffic. The 1850's would see Buffalo become a force to be reckoned with on the national railroad scene.

Native son, Daniel Davidson Bidwell, heir to the Banta and Bidwell Shipbuilding Company had been instrumental in organizing Buffalo's first police force. He became a Colonel in the 49th NY Volunteer unit and fought in that war. He rose to the rank of Brigadier General and gave his life fighting. Buffalo has named a beautiful parkway in his honor.

Shipyards, iron and steel mills, meat packing plants, flourmills, and railroad car industries were born, grew, and thrived there. Almost half of the wheat milled and transported from Buffalo's mills left this country for the "old world" from which new people continued to come. The Irish, the Italian, the Germans, and the Poles – many still call Buffalo home, and they are now joined by many of African, Hispanic, and Asian descent making Buffalo a truly ethnically diverse City.

In 1893 one George Westinghouse came to Buffalo and brought Nikola Tesla. Together they built the generators for the new Niagara Falls Power Company's House #1 which began harnessing the power of the great Falls to make electricity. Buffalo became the first city with widespread electric power. Electricity led to Buffalo's new name – the "City of Light." It also called to companies like Lackawanna Steel and Iron, Union Carbide, and the Aluminum Company of America. After graduating from Cornell University, Willis Haviland Carrier, a native son, came to work at Buffalo Forge. While working on a project for a NY City publishing firm he invented Air Conditioning.

The early part of the twentieth century saw the invention of the motorcar and Buffalo was no stranger to that either. The luxury automobile made in Buffalo by Pierce Arrow, was chosen by President Taft as the first official automobile for the White House. In 1917 after an automobile accident, industrialist and philanthropist John R. Oshei invented the windshield wiper. He built three facilities in Buffalo to manufacture Trico windshield wipers. When companies were leaving Buffalo for lands where labor was less expensive, Trico eventually followed suit. In 1998 headquarters were moved away from Buffalo, but Plant #1 was on the National Register of Historic Places anyway. The John R. Oshei Foundation is one of the largest in the area and the New Women and Children's Hospital will be named for him.

In 1901 the Pan-American Exposition held in Buffalo, was a spectacular event in more ways than one. It was glorious with all the newly-supplied electricity and President William McKinley was there to deliver a speech on trade policies. His decision to remain for an extra day proved to be unwise and Leon Czolgosz, an anarchist, shot him. The most prominent physician of the time – Dr. Roswell Park was already involved in surgery in Niagara Falls. Dr. Matthew Mann then president of the UB Medical School performed the surgery but the President succumbed to his injuries six days later. Theodore Roosevelt was summoned to Buffalo, and became the 26th President after taking the oath of office in the home of John Millburn.

That home is now a National Historic site.

Prohibition also occurred in the early part of the century. German people, however, loved their beer and continued to brew and consume it. In large quantities - it is said that in the year 1908, 31 million gallons of beer was brewed and consumed in Buffalo alone. Buffalo citizens have a very long history of beer making, almost since they first settled here. The area surrounding Buffalo was a major hop-growing area. After a short hiatus, the descendants of those earlier people are once again engaged in the making of excellent products.

In 1927, the Peace Bridge that links Buffalo to Fort Erie in Canada, opened. Buffalo became the main US gateway to the Toronto-Hamilton area.

More than 80% of the trade between the States and Canada occurs through Buffalo. With five bridges to Canada, Buffalo is one of the key eastern border crossings.

The Great Depression hit Buffalo citizens as hard as all the others but, Buffalo's citizens are tenacious.

When they opened the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1957, Buffalo began to flounder. The Great Lakes now had direct access to the Atlantic Ocean and all the great cities on the Lakes and the Mississippi River also felt the financial impact. Trucks began to become more important in transporting goods. Improvements in electricity transmission made proximity to power sources unimportant. Mechanization needed fewer workers. Citizens of Buffalo began to leave for places they considered better.

The largest sports-licensed headwear company in the country – New Era Cap company – now calls Buffalo home. Because of Buffalo's longtime

friendship with Canada, Labatt Beer now calls Buffalo its US headquarters. One of the world's largest family-owned food manufacturer, Rich Products is in Buffalo. And if you like cheese, Sorrento is also based there.

Buffalo smells like Cheerios - because Cheerios are made there too!

You may wonder why the city is called Buffalo. After all, that animal never lived here. Those who live here have several explanations. One is that the animal did live here once. Another postulates that one of the Native people looked like a Buffalo with his headdress and bushy hair. So they named the city after him.

The last is that Buffalo is a mispronunciation of the French *beau fleuve*, which means "beautiful river" and speaks to the Niagara River, which connects Lake Erie to Lake Ontario. Because the city of Buffalo, NY, is, after all, about the fun. Come and see why!



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Sinningia 'Aurora Borealis'

***Best Other
Gesneriad -
Commercial
Hybridized by:
Bobbi Johannsen***

AVSA – Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner, Chairman • 12916 Midfield Terrace • St. Louis MO 63146

April 1, 2017 to August 1, 2017



Thumbprint - Under \$25

Phillip Stevenson

Pam Branch

Mary Vasconcelles

AVC of Burlington County/N.J.

In lieu of judging fees for Bob Kurzynski

Sue Howard-Ross

Janice Murray

Jo Ann Levine

Joan Wilson

Marion Hamtil

Stephen Barber

Virginia Barthelemy

Elizabeth Tan

Josane Wagner

Robert McNeel

Carol Semrau

Susan Hapner

In memory of a wonderful friend, Kent Stork

Alice Inlow

Kevin Degner

Thomas Lovelace

Anna Lannerson

In memory of Kent Stork

Marian and David McGath

In memory of Kent Stork



Multi Color - \$50-\$99

Marge and Bill Farrand

Wisconsin Council of AV Clubs

Trudy Brekel

Judith Hess

Loris Purtzer

In memory of Kent Stork

First Nighter of Dallas

Jill and David Jensen

In memory of Kent Stork

Mary Reifschneider

In memory of Kent Stork



Two Tone - \$25-\$49

Claire Ulanoff

In memory of Kent Stork

Randy Mc Mahill

Oshkosh Violet Society



Fantasy - \$500-\$999

Joyce Stork

From donations received at Kent's memorial service to purchase a sign needed for the front of the Beaumont AVSA office.

AVSA DONATION FUND LEVELS



Thumbprint (Under \$25)



Geneva (\$100-\$499)



Two-Tone (\$25-\$49)



Fantasy (\$500-\$999)



Multicolor (\$50-\$99)



Chimera (Over-\$1000)

The Future of African Violets: How to Cultivate the Interest of Younger Growers

By Karin Peters

In our office (aka violet room), I focused intently on returning some emails when I heard, "Mama, I watered ALL your violets for you!" I whipped my chair around to see my sweet five-year-old standing there with a watering can by a stand full of violets, now soaked and overflowing with water. As I stared in dismay at the drenched leaves and wet crowns, my daughter's sweet smile of accomplishment quickly turned to a face of tears. She could see by my wide eyes that Mama wasn't happy. My first inclination was to lecture her on proper violet watering etiquette, however, clearer senses prevailed as we cleaned up the mess and dried off leaves.

The "Flood of 2016" brought back some fond memories of visiting my grandparents' house. I was always welcomed with a big hug before walking straight to the plant stand to see what treasures awaited. The hot Houston sun would stream through the sheers onto a spectrum of colors, all in full bloom. My grandfather would tell me about each plant and how to care for them. I was amazed at how such decadent flowers were the result of such little work. As contagious as it is, 'violet fever' quickly spread to my mother who started growing them on lighted shelves in her laundry room of all places. Hopefully, I can spread the same joy for African violets to my daughter one day.

It came as quite a surprise when I found out recently that the number of members in AVSA has declined to just over 3,000. I can't help but wonder what it means for the future of our beloved hobby. Continued interest in African violets is vital, not just to AVSA, but to the hobby as a whole.

Without the engagement of younger generations as well as older generations, many vendors will suffer a loss of business, and a lack of supply

only decreases new interest. The question arises as to how to better relate to younger generations and encourage their involvement in growing:

Start 'Em Young

Allow children, from a young age, to experience the true joy of nature. For many of us, our interest in African violets started at an impressionable age. Susan McClurea states about her two young children, "they LOVE to help me with my plants. Whether it's watering, planting leaves, or separating babies, they love to learn."

Encourage your children or grandchildren to grow plants in their windowsills as soon as they are big enough to hold the watering can. There are so many opportunities for a child to learn responsibility from a \$2 plant. Teach the basics and gently tell them the best way to care for their plants – knowing that mistakes along the way are learning opportunities. Imagine their excitement when they see tiny buds appear and know they helped to make them happen.



The Gift That Keeps On Giving

In preparation for Mother's Day, Donna Juergenson roots many plants to give away to the children at church for them to give to whomever they wish. This past Mother's Day was the second

year she has given out violets and Donna had children waiting on her this year! She also included a sheet entitled "African Violets 101" with basic care instructions with every plant she gave out.

I've made a habit of giving violets to new neighbors and my daughter's teachers, along with basic care instructions. I can't imagine a better gift to give someone. Plants in Oyama pots are great for new growers. I have even hot-glued burlap and lace to the pots to make the gifts even more special.



The Principle of the "Open Chair"

In preparation for a meeting, you will always have open chairs in case visitors come, but be sure to carry that same attitude into every aspect of the club. Keep in mind the potential demographic and skill level of newcomers when you are planning meetings and promotion. Continue to share knowledge, knowing that most newcomers will probably know very little about violets.

Problems novice growers are likely to encounter are overwatering, thrips, and lighting issues, so these topics should be discussed. New growers who encounter such problems may get discouraged and give up without knowledge of

solutions. Our club does an annual leaf bingo that is a great opportunity for inviting friends that are interested in the hobby. Be sure to make food and friendship a part of every meeting.

Social Media

Use social media in promoting your violet club by putting the younger generation's technical skills to work. Social media provides an opportunity to reach a much wider audience at any time of day. This may include a Facebook group where members can post questions and pictures of their plants. Also, Pinterest is a great resource for violet enthusiasts. Working just like a pin board, you can save images and go back to them later. Encourage club members to have boards entitled "Violets I Have" and "Violets I Want" to make trading leaves easier and more engaging. YouTube videos can be a very helpful resource to help members with repotting, putting down leaves, and other skills.

There are so many young adults who are "plant people" but we also want to convert them to "AV people." Each of us know how addictive African violets can be, so providing accessible information is key, and the beauty of these plants will take care of the rest. There are so many ways that clubs can adapt to the changing needs of their members while still maintaining their greatest strengths. To engage younger people in our hobby, we must remember that friendliness, enjoyment, and availability of useful information are the keys to any successful strategy.



In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

Many individuals get their first experience in hybridizing by finding an unexpected seed pod on one of their plants. Unplanned seed pods are often the result of two causes: 1) thrip pollination or 2) growth of the stigma on the pistil into an anther. No matter the cause, unexpected seed pods are usually the result of a self-pollination event, meaning that the seedlings have the same plant as both the seed parent and the pollen parent. The question arises is that if the inbreeding from a self-pollination will affect the health, vigor and variety of the seedlings and if it is a waste of time to grow out the seeds.

Close inbreeding is often done to set or stabilize certain genetic traits, meaning that the offspring will be very similar to the parent. This has been done in many plant and animal species to establish certain breeds. Many readers will be familiar with the work done with dogs to create the many different breeds that exist today. Many readers will also recognize the dangers of close inbreeding. While you can fix certain desirable traits using inbreeding, undesirable and even fatal traits are also reinforced by allowing recessive traits to be combined and expressed. Thus, very close inbreeding is often not desirable in many instances and can be dangerous to the overall health of the organism.

With African violets, a self-pollinated seed pod would have some of the same risks of close inbreeding as with other animals or plants. Some of the seedlings may be highly stunted, grow "funny" or otherwise express undesirable traits. However, the biggest disappointment to a grower would likely be that most of the seedlings will closely resemble each other and/or the parent plant. Very little of anything "new" would be seen in the seedlings. Recessive traits may be expressed that were not suspected in the parent plant in a few seedlings. Some examples might be pink or white flowers or star-shaped blooms. If the plant was heterozygous



for a dominant trait such as fantasy flowers or raspberry edges, some of the offspring might have a more intense expression of the trait as homozygous or double dosed seedlings will be produced. Sometimes these might be an improvement on the original parent plant even if the trait itself is not "new", having been present in the parent.

If you have never hybridized or grown African violets from seed and you find an unexpected seed pod on one of your plants, think about taking the time to allow the seeds to mature and try your hand in growing out the seedlings. Your efforts might not produce anything spectacularly "new", but with African violets you have a very high probability of getting something you'll find interesting and worth your time.

Q: One of my seedlings has lovely single flowers, but unfortunately is a petal dropper. What can I cross this plant with to work around the dropping trait?

A: Most hybridizers try to stay away from plants that drop their flowers and will relentlessly discard any seedling with that trait. However, I do appreciate that sometimes a seedling may have many other desirable traits so your question about a possible solution is not without merit.

I'd suggest taking a look at the parents of the original cross or another seedling to see if they show the traits you are interested in conserving but have flowers that don't drop. Usually non-dropping is a form of double petals and is a dominant to dropping. If one of the parents has non-dropping flowers, a backcross to this parent may conserve the other desirable traits and add non-dropping petals back to the mix. If another seedling from the same cross has non-dropping petals, crossing the two seedlings together to get an F2 generation may also solve the problem.

I would not suggest self-pollinating the seedling with the dropping petals. This type of inbreeding

would be similar to the lethal traits from inbreeding discussed in the opening of this column. It is unlikely that you'll get rid of this trait this way. Crossing a recessive with itself will not give you a dominant trait expression in the next generation.

Q: Some flowers seem to last much longer than others. Is there any way to breed for longer lasting flowers?

A: It has been my observation that flowers with green in their coloration often act more like leaves and last longer than other flower types or colors. Green flowers can be a challenge to work with because of sterility reasons, but if you are after longer lasting flowers, you might try working with green edged flowers of some sort as one of your parents.

Q: The species plant Saintpaulia goetzeana (or Streptocarpus goetzeanus using the Nishi et. al 2015 naming system) seems to have many nice foliage characteristics. Why hasn't it been used more in hybridizing?

A: The main reason this plant hasn't been used in hybridizing is that it is a very shy bloomer and most cannot get it flower under their home growing conditions. I have never been able to get this species to bloom. This plant is essential a cloud forest species, growing at high elevations with cool temperatures and high humidity. These conditions are very difficult to duplicate for the average

grower. Those who have succeeded in flowering this species have grown the plant in cool greenhouses or on unheated (but not freezing) porches. Consequently there are few flowers to work with for hybridizing. I have heard rumors of those who have been successful in blooming this species trying some self-pollinations, but I've not heard of the outcomes of their efforts. Nor have I heard of any efforts to cross-pollinate this species to modern cultivars. I would worry that hybrids with this species might inherit the growing conditions from the wild parent for low temperatures, high humidity etc., making the hybrids difficult to grow and flower. However, I certainly hope to someday be successful in getting this species to flower and trying my hand in using it in hybridizing.

Q: I like growing plants with ruffled flowers. Is there any way to identify a seedling with ruffled flowers before it actually blooms?

A: Ruffled flowers are frequently linked with ruffled or wavy foliage. If you select seedlings for this foliage type you may also be selecting them for ruffled flowers when they get big enough to bloom. I'm not sure how big your seedlings would have to be to detect ruffled or wavy foliage with confidence, but this might save you some growing space as compared to waiting until the plants reach blooming size.

***Columnea
'Firebird'***
Judges Special Award
Exhibited by:
Paul Sorano



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Jersey Snow Flakes

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis

Hybridized by: R. Kurzynski

Standard

Eclipse Day 2017!

By David Kesler

As I am sitting down to write this article, the promise of the TOTAL ECLIPSE today brings to mind how long good things take to actually happen sometime. Even though we are not really in the Path of Totality, about 77%, it will give us a taste of the April 2024 eclipse where we in North East Texas are much closer to that 70 mile wide path. By the time you read this it will be really old news, except for those who spent 3 years worth of vacation money to get to that spot where darkness sweeps over them and hovers for about 2.5 minutes, like a really long ride at Disneyland.

Well something else extraordinary is happening now. First Class for Mac is in the AVSA store! I bet you thought it would never happen. You may have heard rumors that something was going to be available to the 10% of us that "think different" as Steve Jobs famously encouraged. It really is in the store and it doesn't cost a single cent more than the PC version.

You can now get rid of that old clunker of a PC that you kept just to run First Class. You can even export your user database and import it into your shiny new FC4Mac, as I have come to refer to it. What else can you expect?

1. Everything you can do with FCv2, you can do with FC4Mac, and then some. Well, there is one very small thing you can't do, it won't print to a Demo Label Maker.
2. There are a lot of new features that Joe Bruns had been working on for the next version for PC, he gave me all those design changes, which shortened development time considerably. By the way, Joe contributes SO much in time and effort to this organization, his help made this project a joy.
3. It works the way Mac programs are expected to work.
4. It uses the same update files that the PC program uses, so updates are easily and familiar to install on your system.

5. It uses the same password system that you have been using on the PC, no need to buy a different data subscription for the Mac.
6. You can investigate the program through the AVSA web site. I would suggest looking through the "Features" first, it details much of the actual workings of the program.
7. There is a complete set of Video Tutorials on the web site. The hansom guy at the top of the page is me. Alva, my wife, really likes this picture. We don't own a sailboat, but it was a nice backdrop for Texans in England.
8. There is an "Entries" report that will generate a hard copy to give to the Entries desk at a show. It contains all the necessary information and a QR code that will allow the newest version of the AVSA Show Entries Program to scan your information into the computer at the show once the proper scanner is attached.
9. There is a "Grooming Schedule" report that allows you to enter a show or sale date and then prepares a report for grooming your plants based on that end date. This report is very configurable.
10. There are new ways to "Search" in the Search function.
11. There are lot more features, but you will need to go to the Store page on the AVSA web site to research them.

I have to say that Joe Bruns was a wonderful help in this project. I can't think of any way he could have been more supportive and helpful. Thank you, Joe. Also I would like to thank all the people that helped with the testing of FC4Mac, especially Mel Grice.

If you have been waiting for First Class to come to Mac, your wait is over and I hope you enjoy using this new product as much as I did developing it.

I have been working on other products for AVSA members that I will be sharing in the near future.

Do you have too many plants? Here's what to do, and how.

By Neil Lipson

I have a confession. I have too many plants and I've lost control. It is the curse of addiction that plagues many experienced growers. What occurs is very simple: you only have so much time to groom, repot, water, prevent insects and other pathogens. The joke I tell is that I'm an expert in reviving a plant that is near-death. That is not a happy way to grow violets! Very few, if any, of my violets die with the result that my collection just grows and grows and grows. It's a time bomb. So, from my up close and personal experience, here's what to do and how to do it. Ready for a challenge?

The first question you must ask yourself is why are you growing so many plants? Are you a researcher? Do you have chimeras that need "back-ups?" Do you hybridize? If these are the reasons, there is a solution for this. However, if you just are growing hundreds of plants with no special purpose, then this is quite different.



If you don't have any rare plants or chimeras, then you don't need backups! You can always pull off a leaf or two to start new plants if a plant has a problem (and, of course, you toss the plant that has a problem). But, for those chimeras or other rare plants, what I have done is a method similar to what Pauline Bartholomew discussed in her book "Growing to Show." Whenever any of my chimeras produce a sucker, as soon as it's big enough to handle, I pull it off and start it in a Solo® cup. Once it grows, I give it away and keep track as to who

received the plant. That person then becomes my "backup" for that chimera.

I use either a 3 oz. Solo® cup or one or two sizes larger, put them in a tray and then place a dome over them. I actually do not give them much light, and they live in the dome, maintenance free for a few weeks without needing water or attention. Please notice that the dome has the windows slide on a closed position to minimize any loss of humidity. See photo below:



Once your leaves or suckers have produced enough baby plants to keep only one or two of the stronger ones and then give away all the extras to your friends and club members. And, keep the promise that if you break off a leaf or two when tending to your plants that you DON'T have to keep them. That's what the trash can is for! After all, when you're repotting, you do take off a lot of leaves to keep the symmetry that we strive for in single-crowned plants. Most of those leaves are old and not worthy of your attention.

A second question is to take a very close look at all of your plants and ask yourself "Is every one a "favorite?" Is it the special bloom or leaf that you admire? Or, is it just an okay plant or one that simply doesn't produce, as it should? It may have beautiful leaves but only one or two blossoms on a stem. Would you really miss it if you gave it away to a friend or a nursing home? It's taking up SPACE! There's one exception: Vintage varieties (those that

are over twenty-five years old). If you don't want to keep it in your collection, find it a good home. Too many of our heritage plants have been lost forever.

And, try to resist temptation in sales rooms or raffle tables! With all due respect to our brilliant hybridizers, if you spend all this time to divest your collection of extra plants and then purchase a couple of dozen more, you've defeated the purpose that will only lead to future frustration! Pick a number of how many plants you can adequately care for every week, and stick with it. If you buy or win a dozen plants that you simply must have, do it with the serious intention of taking a dozen plants on your stands and giving them away.

You're not running a greenhouse and making any real money from all this work! It takes a LOT of time to give the proper care to each plant you have in your collection. If you have too many, all you're doing is diluting your energy away from your prize-winning violets. And let me tell you, there is too much to do in life without spending it all in growing too many plants.

I would like to thank Carolee Carter for her technical help and proofing this article.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern time. He will return your call.



Anne & Frank Tinari Endowment Fund

Janet Riemer • 256 Pennington-Harbourton Rd. • Pennington, NJ 08534

May-June 2017 • Total this period: \$1,080.00



Geneva – \$100-\$499

Amethyst African Violet Club

In memory of Kathleen Dickman

Bill Foster

*In memory of Martha Turner, Peggy Mooney,
Doris Carson and Kent Stork*

Lone Star African Violet Council

In memory of Kent Stork

First Nighter African Violet Society of Dallas



Multicolor – \$50-\$99

First African Violet Society of Denton (TX)

African Violet Society of Minnesota

In memory of Palma Trapp

African Violet Society of Minnesota

In memory of Kent Stork

Janet Riemer

In memory of Kent Stork

Linda & Albert Hall

In memory of Kent Stork

Amethyst African Violet Club

*In memory of Nancy Amelung's sister,
Louise Charboneau*

Garden State African Violet Club (NJ)

In lieu of judging expenses for Laurel Brown

African Violet Society of Greater Tulsa

In memory of Kent Stork



Two-Tone – \$25-\$49

Anne M. Nicholas

Lynn & Doug Allen

In memory of Kent Stork

African Violet Club of Burlington County (NJ)

*In lieu of judging expenses for Marianne
Gershon, Judy Smith, Joan Santino, Susan
Hanna, Barbara Jones and Tim Ferguson*



Thumbprint – Under \$25

Joy Rohan

Metropolitan St. Louis African Violet Council

In Lieu of judging fees for Randy Deutsch

Coming Events

September 15 & 16, 2017 - TEXAS

Dallas Metro African Violet Fall Sale
North Haven Gardens, 7700 Northaven Rd.
Dallas, TX 75230
Both Days: 10 am - 4 pm
African Violets and Other Gesneriads.
Two daily workshops on care
of African Violets and Gesneriads
11 am and 2 pm Public invited - no charge
Contacts: Meredith Hall - (254) 896-2397
m.hall@reagan.com
or Bill Foster - (972) 279-5993
1bpforster@sbcglobal.net

September 16 & 17 - California

Delta Gesneriad & African Violet Society
Show/Sale
'America the Beautiful'
Saturday, September 16: 1 pm to 4 pm
Sunday, September 17: 11 am to 3 pm
Sacramento Garden Arts Center
3330 McKinley Blvd
Sacramento, California 95816
Info Contact: Jeani Hatfield (916) 645-3487
<geojeani@netscape.com>

September 16 - TENNESSEE

Memphis African Violet Society
Fall Sale: 10 am - 2 pm
Central Christian Church
531 South McLean Blvd
The corner of McLean and Peabody.
Email: bakerbethrn@gmail.com
Beth Baker (901) 550-7860
<https://www.facebook.com/memphisavs>

October 7 - MICHIGAN

Michigan State African Violet Society
Display & Sale, African Violets,
Streps & other Gesneriads
Saturday, October 7: 10 am - 4 pm
Matthaei Botanical Gardens - Room #125
1800 Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Info: LynnAllen0413@comcast.net

October 7 & 8 - TEXAS

Spring Branch African Violet Club
Annual Fall Sale
Judson Robinson Jr. Community Center
2020 Hermann Drive
Houston, TX 77004
Oct 7 - 10 am - 4 pm
Oct 8 - 10 am - 3 pm
Info: Karla Ross 281-748-8417
Email: kjwross@yahoo.com

October 13 & 14 - ARKANSAS

African violet Show and Sale
Central Arkansas AVS
Friday, Oct. 13 - 1 to 5 pm.
Saturday, Oct. 14 - 9 am to 4 pm.
North Little Rock Community Center
2700 Willow St. North Little Rock, Arkansas 72114
For info: Contact Danny Tidwell
<dantwell@yahoo.com>

October 14 - PENNSYLVANIA

African Violet Society of Philadelphia
Saturday, Oct 14 - 11 am - 4 pm
Annual Judged Show/Plant Sale
Cathedral Village Retirement Community
600 E Cathedral Road, Phila., PA 19128
Admission free. More information:
www.phillyviolets.org or call: (610) 272-6961

October 14 & 15 - WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs
Annual Judged Show & Sale
St. Jude the Apostle Church Hall
531 Knapp St., Oshkosh, WI
Oct. 14 - 10 am - 4 pm
Oct 15 - 1 am - 3 pm
Info: Kevin Degner (920) 426-3764
kevin_degner@sbcglobal.net



October 21 & 22 - Missouri

African Violet Club of Greater Kansas City

Annual Show/Sale

Oct 21 - 9 am - 3 pm

Oct 22 - 10 am - 3 pm

Loose Park Garden Center

51 & Wornall, Kansas City, MO

Info: Lynn Canning

lcanning@sbcglobal.net

October 26 - 28 - Virginia

Mid-Atlantic AVS Regional

Convention/Show & Sale

Fredericksburg Hospitality

House & Conference Center

2801 Plank Rd., Fredericksburg, Virginia, 22401

Open to the public: Friday, October 27

Sale: 9 am to 5 pm

Show: 1 pm to 5 pm

Saturday, October 28

Sale/Show: 9 am - 4 pm

Convention Chair: Sue Hoffmann

violetsue123@outlook.com

(757) 463-5383, Club Website URL:

www.maavs.org

November 4 & 5 - New Jersey

TriState African Violet Council

Annual Judged Show & Plant Sale

Frelinghuysen Arboretum

53 East Hanover Avenue

Morristown, New Jersey

Saturday, Nov 4 - 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Sunday, Nov 5 - 10:30 am - 2:00 pm

Info: Janet Sierzega Show Chair

jsierzega@gmail.com

November 9 -11- TEXAS

Lone Star African Violet Council

2017 Convention

Wyndham Houston West Energy Corridor

14703 Park Row Boulevard

Houston, TX 77079

Plant sale dates/times

Thursday, Nov 9 - Noon - 5 pm

Friday, Nov 10, 9 am - 4:30pm

Saturday, Nov 11, 10 am - 4 pm

Show open to public

Friday, Nov 10: 2 pm - 4:30 pm

Saturday, Nov 11: 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Info: Karla Ross, (281) 748-8417

Email: kjwross@yahoo.com

***Rob's Boogie
Woogie***

*Hybridized by: R. Robinson
Semiminiature*



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

Myviolet.com was a bit of a surprise when I opened it. This is from Optimara, and tells about the retail end of the business.

One of the first features the reader sees is the Find a Retailer map. I put in Laramie, and clicked first on the within-five-miles option. Nothing came up. I then clicked on within-50-miles, and it showed two locations where Optimara violets are sold. Ironically, one was the local K-Mart in Laramie. For some reason, it did not show on the lower miles option. (Laramie is not that big. Just out of curiosity, I wanted to know how far K-mart was from my house. It is all the way across town, at 2.1 miles.) If you try this feature, it might be wise to put in a higher mile option.

The Optimara photo gallery on this site is excellent. Each picture has either a red X or a green check mark in the upper right-hand corner. The X indicates that the pictured plant is either a Legacy or a retired African violet. You can click on the picture, and still get all the information about the plant.

The green check mark indicates that the plant is currently in production. I clicked on California, which is part of the US series. The information provided included: bloom type, color, leaf type and color, the year the plant was introduced, the year it was revised, the AVSA registration number, the patent number, the variety number, the trademark (Optimara) and the fact that it was hybridized by Reinhold Holtcamp, Sr.

Another excellent feature is the Guide to African Violets. This includes information and photos about violet parts, flower types, leaf types, care tips, and violet history. There are two links, one to a flip book version that can be read online, and one to a PDF version that can be read online or printed. I perused the bloom and leaf type sections. These are outstanding resources for anyone wanting to know anything about those



parts of the plant. Presumably the other sections are just as good.

You must register to access many helpful parts of the website. This was a straightforward process. I filled out the required form, and waited a few minutes for the email with the link to confirm.

One of these features involves setting up your own Optimara violet collection page. You can update and review your collection. This could prove to be a very helpful feature in the event of a lost tag.

The care pages are excellent. The Easy-Care page has virtually everything you need to know in a condensed form, on just one page. More detailed information is available by clicking on the appropriate tabs. These include Water, Light, Temperature, Flowering, Soil, Potting, Fertilizer, Pests and more, and Grooming. Again, the information is straight forward and easy to understand.

The Monthly Gallery is a nice feature. Myviolet.com users can submit photos of their Optimara violets and these will be displayed on the website.

Browsing Dr. Optimara is another good page. A menu is divided into three sections, part, symptom, and probable cause of the problem. Click on the appropriate words, and the probable cause is shown.

I really liked the Frequently Asked Questions tab. This is filled with miscellaneous questions people might have about violets and their care. One question and answer addresses violets that are in bad condition at a retail outlet. Although Optimara does send care instructions with the plants, once they leave the greenhouse Optimara no longer has any control over the care and handling of the plants. There is a great Visual Health Comparison, with examples of a perfect plant with fresh blooms and happy foliage. A healthy plant may have wilted blooms, but the foliage is still healthy. Both are perfectly acceptable pur-

chases. The unhealthy violet had droopy leaves and a brown center, with the caveat of "Do Not Buy."

Because I registered for this site, I had the option of being notified through the Fresh Violet

Alert of when new violets arrive at my local retailer. I will be interested to see how many emails are the result of this registration.

This is a great resource for anyone interested in violets. It can be found at www.myviolet.com



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Optimara Little Moonstone

Exhibited by: Catherine Carter

Hybridized by: Holtkamp

Miniature

"And the winners are ..." 434 Plumwood Way • Fairview, TX 75069

By Mary Corondan

Email: mcorondan@yahoo.com

AVC OF BURLINGTON COUNTY, NJ

– **Winners:** Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Cherry Topping, Buckeye Everlasting; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Boo Man, Cajun's Lil Sprinkles, Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Species Collection: *S. clone tongwensis*, *S. clone tongwensis* Uppsala 3397, *S. clone orbicularis* var. *purpurea*; Best in Show/Best Species: *S. clone tongwensis*; Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Semiminiature: Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Trailer: Rob's Gundaroo; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Sandy Skalski**. 2nd Best Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Azurite, Jersey Jackpot, Jolly Orchid; 2nd Best Species Collection: *S. clone tongwensis*, *S. clone magungensis*, *S. clone confusa* Mather E; Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Winter Wood', **Janet Shaeffer**. Best Miniature: Optimara Little Azurite, **Ray Burnside**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Susan Arnao**.

AVC OF MORRIS COUNTY, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Drops, Jersey Blue Moonlight, Jersey Surprise; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jersey Sugar Plums, Jolly Pepper, Ness' Cranberry Swirl; Best Species Collection: *S. 5c1 clone ionantha* Mather No. 20, *S. clone ionantha* subsp. *ionantha*, *S. 5c1 clone tongwensis* Uppsala 3397; Best Semiminiature: Jersey Sugar Plums; Best Miniature: Honey Blue Angel; Best Trailer: Jersey Fantasy Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Bob Kurzynski**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Optimara Romance; Best Design, **Emilia Rykowski**. Best Species: *S. 5b clone confusa*, **Janet Sierzega**. Best Gesneriad: *Codonanthe carnosae*, **Jill Fisher**. Design Sweepstakes, **Karyn Cichocki**.

AV COUNCIL OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Dragon, Optimara EverGrace, Buckeye Cran-



berry Sparkler; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Dazzler, Jolly Shadow, Rob's Boondoggle; Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy; Best Trailer: Rob's Wagga Wagga; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Gay Wilson**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Frosty Bubbles, Rob's Combustible Pigeon, Rob's Boogie Woogie; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Combustible Pigeon; Best Species: *S. 5c1 clone House of Amani*, **Maureen Pratt**. Best Standard: Marshlands, Best Gesneriad: *Primulina sinensis*, **Chris Hedburg**. Best Design, **Ruth Beck**. Design Sweepstakes (tie): **Ruth Beck and Gay Wilson**.

AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY OF ROCHESTER, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Blue Dragon, Ma's Jamaican Farewell, Cajun's Queen's Lace; Best Standard: LE-Persikovoe Siianie, **Olive Ma Robinson**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Boondoggle, Rob's Fuddy Duddy, Munchkin Kisses; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: SK-Yablonevvi Sad; Best Miniature: Rob's Chilly Willy, **Ralph Robinson**. Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Best Species: *S. rupicola*, **Susie Nettleton**. Best Gesneriad: *Codonanthe carnosae*, **Donna LaDelia**. Best Design, **Gertrude Murphy**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Fred Packer**. Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Festenstein**.

AV AND GESNERIAD SOCIETY OF SYRACUSE, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rebel's Minnesota Haze, Waterdancer, Apache Freedom; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rebel's Minnesota Haze, **Ann Kelly**. Best Semiminiature: Thunder Surprise; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia iarae*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Donna Coleman**. Best Miniature: Ballet Snowcone; Best Trailer: Honeysuckle Rose; Best Species: *S. 5c1 clone Sigi Falls*, **Shirley Mills**. Best Design, **Lee Hoke**. Design Sweepstakes, **Penny Moore**.

AVS OF MINNESOTA, MN – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara AnnaBelle, Optimara Indiana II, Optimara Millennia; Best AVSA Collection: Little Blue Bandit, Optimara Little Ruby, Windsome; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Little Blue Bandit; Best Standard: Optimara AnnaBelle; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Scooter; Best Trailer: Fun Trail; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kathy Lahti**. Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea* 'Paul Kroll', **Jude Neumann**. Best Species: *S. 8 clone rupicola*, **Gail Podany**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Werness**.

AVS OF SPRINGFIELD, DELAWARE COUNTY, PA – Winners: Best Species Collection: *S. rupicola*, *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, *S. 5b clone confusa*, **Alice Dulaney**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Frozen in Time; Best Semiminiature: Snuggles; Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Trailer: Pixie Pink; Best Species: *S. rupicola*; Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Dragon's Blood'; Horticulture Sweepstakes; Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Jones**. Best Design, **Joan Santino**.

BAY STATE AVS, MA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cherry Topping, Buckeye Scrumptious, Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler; Best Standard: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, **Christopher Paiva**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler, Buckeye Nostalgia, Wild Irish Rose; Best Semiminiature: Lyon's Little Sweetheart; Best Trailer: Senk's Try the Decaf, **Nancy Manozzi**. Best Miniature: Rob's Love Bite, **Nancy Ivanoff**. Best Species: *S. brevopilosa*, **Cynthia Brooks**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Drako', **Susan Gimblet**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Larry Hoyle**. Design Sweepstakes, **Carol Hess**.

CAPITAL DISTRICT AVS, CA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Kaylih Marie, Jersey Snow Flakes, Amethyst; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Orchid, Rob's Lucky Charm, Planet Kid; Best in Show/Best Standard: Kaylih Marie; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Heat Wave; Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Species: *S. tongwensis*; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Rachel'; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Margaret**

Califano. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Tomorrow's Pink Ice, Harbor Blue, Senk's Big Bells, **Patti Freed**. Design Sweepstakes, **Margaret Schnurr**.

CENTRAL COAST AVS, CA – Winners: Best in Show/Best Standard: Optimara myDelight, **Renee Wilson**. Best Semiminiature: Allegro Cupid Pink; Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Mary Thompson**. Best Trailer: Milky Way Trail; Best Gesneriad: *Columnnea* 'Sylvia', **Elethea Brewen**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Lola Sutherland**.

CINCINNATI AVS AND AVS OF DAYTON, OH – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Kunzite, Optimara Little Amethyst, Granger's Mexicali Rose, **Penny Wichman**. Best Species Collection: *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*, *S. clone tongwensis*, *S. rupicola*, **Al Cenci**. Best Standard: Buckeye Tea Party, **Debbie McInnis**. Best Semiminiature: Allegro Watermelon Ruffles; Best Miniature: Mac's Kismet's Knight; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *grotei*, **Vicki Ferguson**. Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia bullata*, **Mel Grice**.

COLUMBUS AVS, OH – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Jitterbug, Frosted Denim, Windsome; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Windsome; Best Semiminiature: SK-Eurydice, **Julie Jones**. Best Species Collection: *S. clone Kachaoroni*, *S. clone Cha Simba*, *S. ionantha*; Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea flaccida*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Nancy Carr**. Best Standard: Cajun's Royal Knockout, **Susan Joy**. Best Design, **Judy Karcher**. Design Sweepstakes, **Gary Saunders**.

EVENING AVC OF DES MOINES, IA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Freckleface Kid, Cajun's Fascinating Fury, Cajun's Flamboyant Mistress; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Honey Blue Ace, Jolly Orchid, Precious Red; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Rob's Slap Happy; Best Standard: Cajun's Flamboyant Mistress; Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Trailer: Rob's Woolloomooloo; Best Species: *S. 8 clone rupicola*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Randy Mahill**. Best Gesneriad: *Petrocosmea begoniifolia*, **Kathy Mathews**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Vicki Tow**.

FIRST AUSTIN AVS, TX – Winners: Best AVSA Collection: Anastasia, The Alps, Harbor Blue; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Lollipop Kid, Spin-out, Rob's Inner Orbit; Best Semiminiature: Rob's Inner Orbit; Best Miniature: Shirl's Hawaiian Lei; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Penny Smith-Kerker**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Optimara Monet, Twinkle Twirl, Kiwi Dazzler; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Cheyenne, Von's Mariner, Thunder Surprise; Best Trailer: Broadway Star Trail; Best Species: *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather E; Design Sweepstakes, **Glenda Williams**. Best in Show/Best Standard: Makin' Romance, **Dolores Gibbs**. Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* 'Destiny', **Susan Kautz**. Best Design, **Diane Buck**.

GARDEN STATE AVC, NJ – Winners: Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Windsome, Rob's Penny Ante, Jolly Orchid; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Semiminiature: Tiptop; Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *velutina*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Tim Ferguson**. 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Rob's Pewter Bells, Jersey Lilacs, Hector; Best Gesneriad: *Columnnea sanguinea*, **Jan Murasko**. Best Species Collection: *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis*, *S. 5b* clone *confusa* Mather Brother Paddy, *S. rupicola*, **Grace Egan**. Best Standard: Buckeye Seductress, **Michele Gazzara**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Grace I. Rarich**.

LAKESHORE AVS, ONTARIO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Queen's Lace, Vince's Choice, Buckeye Enough Pizzazz; Best Standard: LE-Panochka, **Bruce Williams**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Morgan's Barossa, Optimara Little Omaha, Von's Baby Jay; Best Trailer: RS-Klad, **Beverly Williams**. Best in Show/Best Species: *S. 5c2* clone *diplotricha* Parker; Best Semiminiature: Frilly Dilly; Best Miniature: Little Bo Peep; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Brett Flewelling**. Best Gesneriad: *Nematanthus gregarious*; Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Steven Kerr**.

METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS AV COUNCIL, MO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Ma's Arctic Sky, Cajun's Slow Dance, Buckeye Serenity; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection:

Irish Flirt, Jolly Frills, Ness' Crinkle Blue; Best in Show/Best Miniature: Precious Red; Best Standard: Buckeye Serenity; Best Trailer: Rob's Humpty Doo; Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *ionantha* var. *ionantha*; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Sue Melson**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Clementine, Smooch Me, Joker; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Optimara Little Ottawa, Jolly Magic, Rob's Silver Spook; Best Semiminiature: Jolly Magic, **Linda Sumski**. Best Gesneriad: *Kohleria* 'Prince Albert', **Martha Nix**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Fran Russom**.

OSHKOSH VS, WI – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Jersey Snow Flakes, Ma's Mardi Gras, K's Lilac Infusion; 2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Jolly Blue Clouds, Jolly Blue Bells, Jolly Orchid; Best Standard: Jersey Snow Flakes; Best Miniature: Jolly Orchid; Best Trailer: Deer Trail; Best Species: *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert; Best Design; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kevin Degner**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Live Wire, Rebel's Night Breezes, Kev's Blue Eyes; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Cool Blue, Ness' Crinkle Blue, Rob's Antique Rose; Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Cool Blue, **Betsy Fox**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Remembering John', **Cathy Helder**. Design Sweepstakes, **Doug Kindschuh**.

RICHMOND AVS, VA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Taffeta Blue, Pink Summit, Private Dancer, **Harry Livesay**. Best Species Collection: *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis*, *S. 51* clone *grandifolia* No. 237, *S. 5c1* clone *ionantha*; Best Species: *S. 5c1* clone *tongwensis*; Best Gesneriad: Episcia 'Faded Jade', **Kitty Hedgepeth**. Best in Show/Best Semiminiature: Jolly Andrea; Best Miniature: Shirl's Red Sky, **David Dick**. Best Standard: Rhapsodie Clementine, **Miriam Pendleton**. Best Trailer: Cirelda; Best Design, **Bill Schmidt**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Barbara Greenawalt**. Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Stewart**.

SAINTPAULIA SOCIETY OF LONG ISLAND, NY – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Harbor Blue, Lyon's Lavender Magic, Taffeta Blue; Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Dean's Arctic Frost, Rob's Scrumptious, Jolly Frills; 2nd Best Species Collection: *S. clone orbicularis*, *S. clone ionantha* subsp. *velutina* lite, *S. 5b* clone

confusa; Best Standard: Harbor Blue; Best Miniature: Orchard's Bumble Magnet; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Joseph Palagonia**. Best Species Collection: *S. 5f* clone *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*, *S. 5a* clone *grandifolia* No. 237, *S. 5g* clone *intermedia*; Best in Show/Best Species: *S. 5g* clone *intermedia*; Best Trailer: Rob's Boolaroo; Best Gesneriad: *Primulina* USRBG 98-083, **Edward Bradford**. Best Semiminiature: Jolly Devil; Design Sweepstakes, **Carolyn Klein**. Best Design, **Claire Schirtzer**.

TIDEWATER AVS, VA – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Rhapsodie Michelle II, Ma's Jamaican Farewell, Optimara Hawaii; Best in Show/Best Standard: Rhapsodie Michelle II, **Mandy Banks**. Best Semiminiature: Optimara Little Hopi II, **Nancy Weller**. Best Miniature: Jolly Blue Clouds; Best Gesneriad: *Sinningia* 'Party Dress'; Best Species: *S. 5c2* clone *diplotricha* Parker, **Norma Griswold**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Pat Knight**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **LaDonna Hopson**.

TORONTO AVS, ONTARIO – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Buckeye Delightful, Smooch Me, Happy Harold; Best in Show/Best Standard: Smooch Me, **Doris Brownlie**. 2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection: Cajun's Queen's Lace, Vince's Choice, Ma's Arctic Sky, **Bruce Williams**. Best Semiminiature: Jolly Star; Best Species: *S. ionantha*, **Beverley Williams**. Best Miniature:

Baby White, **Diane Page**. Best Trailer: LE-Erika, **Bill Price**. Best Gesneriad: *Streptocarpus* 'Anna Sui', **Irina Firer**. Best Design; Design Sweepstakes, **Karin Brockmueller**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Alla Kotova**.

TUCSON AVS, AZ – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: Happy Harold, Double Black Cherry, The King; Best Species Collection: *S. rupicola*, *S. 8* clone Cha Simba, *S. 5b* clone *grotei* Silvert; Best in Show/Best Standard: Happy Harold; Best Species: *S. rupicola*, **Candace Baldwin**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Sassy Sister, Rob's Outer Orbit, Rob's Hot Chocolate; *Primulina* 'Aiko'; Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Kathy Bell**. Best Semiminiature: Mac's Misty Meadow, **Robert Richert**. Best Miniature: Windsome; Best Trailer: Cirelda; Best Design, **Judy Soop**. Design Sweepstakes, **Barbara Fuller**.

WINDSOR AVS, CT – Winners: Best AVSA Standard Collection: ShaZam, Rapid Transit, Optimara myDream; Best Trailer: Rob's Galiwinku, **Pamela Veley**. Best AVSA Mini/Semi Collection: Ness' Crinkle Blue, Winnergreen, Cupid's Jewel; Best in Show/Best Standard: Opera's Romeo; Best Semiminiature: Cupid's Jewel, **Charlotte Howson**. Best Gesneriad: *Codonanthe devosiana* 'Paula', **Gloria Cooke**. Best Species: *S. ionantha* subsp. *grandifolia*, **Debra Vallides**. Best Design, **Cindy Fagan**. Horticulture Sweepstakes, **Janice Boyko**. Design Sweepstakes, **Angela Comer**.



Visit the AVSA'S Website:
www.avsa.org

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMERICA, INC.

COMBINED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

DECEMBER 31, 2016

ASSETS:

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 58,445.78
Investments	107,363.40
Accounts Receivable	780.50
Inventories	8,412.57
Prepaid Expenses	2,500.00
Restricted Assets:	
Cash and Cash Equivalents	15,847.29
Investments	148,347.49
Capital Assets:	
Land	10,000.00
Other Capital Assets, Net of Depreciation	<u>32,209.82</u>
 TOTAL ASSETS	 <u>383,906.85</u>

LIABILITIES :

Accrued Payroll Taxes Payable	2,037.36
Sales Taxes Payable	41.13
Deferred Revenue	<u>125,787.72</u>
 TOTAL LIABILITIES	 <u>127,866.21</u>

NET ASSETS:

Net Investment in Capital Assets	42,209.82
Temporarily Restricted	24,856.39
Permanently Restricted	139,353.39
Unrestricted	<u>49,621.04</u>
 TOTAL NET ASSETS	 <u>\$ 256,040.64</u>



A Better Way With Bloomstalks

By Kit Love

Her Name is 'Buckeye Country Gal.' She is without a doubt the most beautiful 'Country Gal' I have ever seen. Every flower is perfect, large and almost covered in fantasy.

I have always grown 'Country Gal,' and have had some really nice ones, but this one is special.

When we get a really great violet, leaf propagation is probably not the best way to go, and we stand a better chance of an exact copy of our special violet if grown from a bloom stem. Of course, for me bloom stem propagation has always been hit or miss until now.

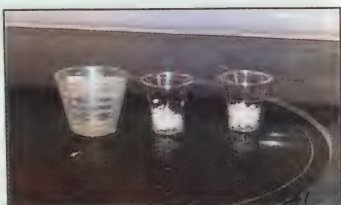
I decided to experiment and do things very differently from what I've always done.

I would like to share how I'm getting 95 – 98% success rate growing bloomstems. I know it sounds too good to be true, but it is wonderfully true!

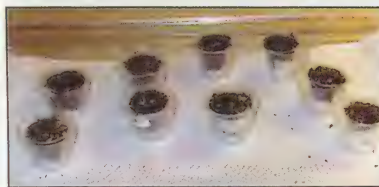
This is how it's done:

1. I soak the bloomstems in warm water, with a couple of drops of Super Thrive, anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes while I prepare the cups.

2. I am using the tiny, clear communion cups I got from my church, see *Photo #1*. I make 3 holes in the bottom of these cups with my hot iron. (3 holes are important for drainage) I add a little perlite in the bottom of the cups, and then add my potting soil.



3. Next, I put the little cups in a one-ounce medicine cup with the name of the plant and the date. **CAUTION!!** You really need to put them in the



medicine cups because they are not stable, and they will fall over! See *Photo #2*.

4. Next step – dip the bloom stalks in Clonex after you have trimmed them to size. I then on their cup to dry for 10 minutes before I plant them. See *Photo #3*.



5. The next thing to do is set 4-6 cups in a small plastic container. I did use the ones that lunch meat comes in, but I recently bought some small ones that Glad makes. This is for stability when you have to open the container to water.

6. I buy food storage containers at the grocery store. I set the little plastic container with the pots inside on the lid of the food storage container and snap it together. See *Photo 5*.



The container is now placed 6" from the lights (I use a box to raise them), and I check them once a week, if they need water, I use an eyedropper and fish fertilizer.

I also found that you don't need large bracts (leaves) on the bloom stalk. Just to see if this method would work with less than perfect bloom stalks. I put down three of 'Buckeye Nostalgia.' They had very, very tiny leaves. I now have one with babies and the other two are still alive!



Got to Love the Wasps!

Plants Grown and Photographed by Patrick Delaney



Wizard's Siege Perilous



Bol's Evening Irja



Senk's Springtime Wasp



Wizard's Prankster



DS/Brayan/DS-Brian



8E Sykospark



Imp's Corroded Edge



Wizard's Froststrike & Senk's Springtime Wasp

Nurturing Baby Plants: An On-going Process

By Paul Kroll

Those of us who have raised children know full well that it is an on-going process. Caring for baby plants is very much the same. Once the baby plants are removed from the "mother leaf," the process begins.

Some folks are a bit squeamish about dividing the clumps of baby plantlets. It is possible to shake the clump gently in a bowl of warm water to loosen the babies from the mother leaf. However you choose to do it, be gentle in dividing them. Save only the strongest, as the weaklings will take forever to get strong growth no matter how much you fuss over them.

Once the babies are divided, decide how you want to pot them into their first new home. I usually use Solo Cups with a generous tablespoon of coarse perlite in the bottom of the cup. I add a light mix of soil on top and a dusting of Marathon on the surface. Using a set of tweezers, I grasp the baby plant by its neck and insert it into a hole I've made in the soil mix. Turn the tweezers and use the broad end to gently firm the soil a bit around the neck of the plant so that you assure the baby roots to come in contact with the soil.

The soil you use should be moist enough to form a loose "snowball" that breaks when dropped. This moisture will help the soil to absorb the water you will set the cup into. I use a mild fertilizer solution and allow the pots to soak there for half an hour or so. Drain them thoroughly and place in a community tray, spacing them so they have room to grow.

Cover the tray full of baby plants with a plastic dome, or even a sheet of plastic wrap gently placed on top of them (not sealed tightly). This step assures the extra humidity to help those seedlings get established. I usually do not water the pots

again for a week or so, but you have to do what works for you in your situation.

Monitor the baby plants as they grow. When new growth forms the expected rosette, trim off the baby leaves to expose the triangular shape of the three leaf pattern we want to encourage. Those three-leaf triangles will assure good symmetry as the plant grows and matures.

I never cease to be amazed at the way the baby plants grow once those superfluous leaves are removed. They grow so fast! After all, the plant is spending energy and food on those leaves and taking away from the more important "inner triangle" we want to encourage.

See the photos that illustrate the baby plants before and after grooming down to the triangles and the trays with their domes, etc.

Continue to monitor your baby plants and continue to remove any leaves that are not needed to maintain the triangles. Pot up the baby plants to the next size pots as they grow. I like to use the mold pot method where the old pot is used to make the proper-sized hole in the soil mix in the new pot. Using this method, the roots are not disturbed, but gently placed into a roomier pot.

These instructions may be used for baby plants of trailing African violets as well. Modify the instructions to allow the crowns to grow as they will. If you are working with a variety that needs to have the crown cut out (or pinched out) to encourage it to trail, then so be it. Allow the "suckers" to form and they will become the crowns desired for good form. Stand back and watch them grow!

From The Violet Connection
Official Publication of the
Ohio State African Violet Society



Shows and Judges

Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Committee

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What a nice convention in Orlando! Congratulations to Linda Price, Thad Scaggs, and their teams, for a job well done.

Congratulations to the following judges who will become Master Judges in October. They are Jacquie Eisenhut and Leonard Re, California, Janet Sorenson, Colorado, Sallie Barlow, Louisiana, Claire Shirtzer, New York, and Janice Judd, Wisconsin.

As usual, the Judges' Breakfast was a lively affair. The question box was full. Here are some of the discussions.

Q. Why are the same judges judging the same classes every year?

A. Judges are assigned according to expertise in judging, and the entire panels are not always on the same panel every year.

Q. Why are judges giving the same point score to different plants? (both scored 98)

A. This happened in a show I recently judged and the plants had to be re-judged to determine what was Best and Second Best in the show.

We have the same question when we receive Collection Sheets with the same score for several different plants. We have preached for years that fractions should be used. *It seems that some judges are not reading or listening.* Please refer to the Guidelines on pages 90 and 91 of the Handbook.

Q. One of the judges on a panel in a recent show refused to judge the design classes, as the plants were not named. There were no cards for this and the schedule did not require this.

A. The designs should have been judged. Named plants are not required to be used in a design. Since there was no requirement in the schedule requiring the cards there was no reason for refusing to judge the designs.



Q. I heard that an underwater design in a recent show was not judged because it had air bubbles. Is that correct?

A. No, another prime example of not reading or listening. On page 70, under Underwater Arrangements, it states that points are not deducted for air bubbles.

There was a long statement, not a question, but almost an essay, stating that the way designs were being judged was atrocious and that the awards were being given to the worst rather than the best designs.

It also stated that Teachers are just handing out Judging Credentials like candy, just because students came to the class. As a teacher of many years I resent this statement. It causes me to wonder what this person's credentials are. The statement was made that *not everyone was meant to judge*, and I agree with that. However, there are some very good judges that prefer to judge Horticulture, and some very good Design Judges.

It is up to an Affiliate to know those judges who enter in design classes and know how to judge them. We might also remember that AVSA is a horticulture Society and the design classes were added to show how violets could be used to decorate the home. Remember that Horticulture must make up two thirds of the show and Design cannot be more than one third. The one third is not a requirement and there are many clubs that have very few members that like to do design. For that reason, a schedule can be approved if it has only one class for design. Our teachers work for many years to even be eligible to apply for a Teacher's Certificate, and must have made high grades to apply. It upsets me that they would be accused of just passing out Judges' Certificates like candy. We will discuss more in the next column.





Kohleria 'Bud's Little Gollum'

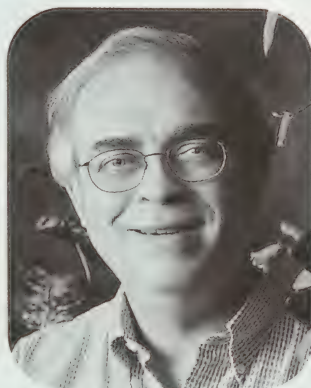
A Family Portrait

By Mel Grice

2019 Crosswind Ct. • Englewood, OH

Email: <melsgrice@earthlink.net

Kohleria 'Bud's Little Gollum' is an example of one of my favorite gesneriads. Bright orange/peach tubular flowers make a nice contrast with the dark green-patterned foliage. Brandon Erikson from Nebraska created this floriferous hybrid. *Kohleria* (('Emily Roberts x ('Peridots Kitlope' x self) x ('Emily Roberts x 'Peridots Kitlope' x self)) is the complex parentage.



Kohlerias have rhizomatous root structures. Rhizomes are one of the three root structures found in gesneriads, the other two being fibrous only, and tuberous. Rhizomes are actually modified stems, and they grow perpendicular to the force of gravity. Scaly rhizomes are produced under the soil and above the soil coming from leaf axils when conditions are favorable. Scaly rhizomes often resemble pine cones and help the plants remain alive during the dry season in the wild. They perform the same function as a tuber or bulb so DO NOT discard the pot if the plant looks dead - it is only resting or dormant.

Kohleria propagation is by stem cuttings in water or mix. Stem cuttings root very quickly, sometimes within days. Rhizomes can be planted whole, in pieces, or by removing individual scales, and planting them. Bear in mind that some *kohlerias* are shy rhizome producers; so don't assume that a pot will be full of rhizomes when you want to propagate. Always take some stem cuttings to be sure.

A crucial factor in rhizome production is keeping the plants consistently well fed and watered. If excess drying occurs too early in the growth cycle, the plants may go dormant prematurely, without producing any rhizomes for next year. That is why I try to have two or more pots of a variety growing, so that I won't lose the variety if I occasionally forget to water

a tray of plants. I try to place each pot in a different part of my plant room so that they are watered on different days. Most *kohlerias* do not have a required dormancy period like some gesneriads do. If pruned back to the soil level after flowering, they usually will sprout again immediately if they have made new scaly rhizomes. Thus, they can be kept going throughout the year with the proper light and warmth levels.

The spectacular plant shown in the photo was grown by Brandon Erikson and was awarded Best in Show honors at the Gesneriad Society Flower Show this summer. He describes it as "a *kohleria* that grows happily in a three-ounce cup," and when grown in a larger pot quickly makes for a beautiful mass-planting display. It produces copious rhizomes, which will quickly fill in a container. At maturity, the plant measures just under six inches in height. The plant in the photo was grown on the top and middle shelves under regular T8 (4) bulbs at a height of 16 inches."





Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

S. 5h clone velutina lite

Judges Special Award

Exhibited by: William Price

Jolly Disco

*Best Other Gesneriad -
Commercial
Exhibited by:
Kathy Lahti*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Mac's Callow Fellow

*Best Other Gesneriad -
Commercial
Exhibited by:
Richard Nicholas*

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Insects and Related Pests and Diseases of African Violets

By Spencer Denyer

From the Newsletter of the *Early Morn African Violet Group, Inc.*
of Australia and New Zealand

Nature of Damage: Pests attacking African violets may be divided into three groups according to the damage they cause. These groups are chewing pest, sucking pests, and nuisance pests.

Damage from chewing pests usually occurs rapidly and is evident immediately. These pests should be eliminated as soon as they are detected. Symptoms of chewing pests include:

1. Wilting of plant (root or crown damage)
2. Severed leaves or flower buds
3. Holes in leaves or flower petals
4. Discolored areas on the surface or margins of leaves or flower petals.

Sucking pests insert their mouthparts into plant tissue and suck out the juices. Some inject toxic compounds into the plant and some are capable of transmitting certain plant diseases. The symptoms of sucking pests often go unnoticed for a period of time. This allows the pests to become established and increase in numbers, resulting in considerable plant damage. The symptoms of sucking pests are:

1. Wilted appearance
2. Presence of honeydew
3. Curling or stunting of leaves
4. Discoloration (yellowing) of leaves
5. Necrotic (dead tissue) spots in leaves.

CHEWING PESTS:

American Cockroach. The American cockroach is the most commonly reported chewing pest of African violets. Both immature and adult cockroaches damage violets. They usually eat on flower buds and blossoms, but they also feed on leaves and leaf petioles. Roaches occasionally cause extensive damage to rooting leaves and seedlings.

Thrips. Several species of thrips attack African

violets. Thrips are minute insects that feed on pollen and tender plant tissue. Although the most common species of thrips found on violets are yellow, others may be tan or black. Violets become infested when thrips enter the home or greenhouse through ventilation systems, window or door screens, on clothing or in infested plants and cut flowers. Virtually every wild and cultivated blossom blooming in the home landscape is infested with thrips.

Damage to violets occurs when thrips feed on the pollen and flower petals. Heavy infestations result in deformed, undersized or discolored blossoms and brown edges on flower petals.

Foliage-Feeding Larvae. Many species of foliage feeding larvae have been observed on African violets. The most common include the salt marsh caterpillar, various loopers and armyworms. In most instances these are accidental pests that have found their way into homes or greenhouses. They attack violets because a more suitable host plant is lacking. These larvae are voracious feeders and only a few can cause severe damage. Removing the larvae from the plants, and destroying them often can achieve control.

Foliage-Feeding Beetles. Beetles are not common pests of African violets; however, several species feed on the plant. These include the twelve-spotted cucumber beetle, banded cucumber beetle, green June beetle, and several species of flea beetles. Beetles are more mobile than foliage feeding larvae and they may cause severe damage in a violet culture if not detected and eliminated quickly.

Snails and Slugs. Snails and slugs are predominantly greenhouse pests. They prefer to feed on very tender tissue and occasionally damage rooting leaves and small seedlings. These pests generally feed at night and hide beneath pots, flats

and other objects during the day. Both snails and slugs leave a slime trail behind them as they travel about. Treatment for snails and slugs should be applied when their presence is detected. Bait formulations are very effective in controlling these pests.

Symphyliids. Symphyliids are about 1/4-inch long. They are milk-white in color, elongated, and have twelve legs. They have long antennae and no eyes. These pests are subterranean in habit and are seldom seen on the soil surface. They prefer moist soil that is high in organic matter. Heaviest populations of symphyliids occur in the fall and winter. They are very active, but are hard to find

unless present in large numbers. Symphyliids seldom cause damage to plants and are usually just a nuisance, but a few species will feed on tender roots of seedlings.

Nuisance pests cause no damage. They are considered pests simply because their presence is not desirable. Such insects flying or hopping about detract from a beautiful centerpiece or a specimen plant on exhibition. Some nuisance pests multiply rapidly and often are found in overwhelming numbers. Such infestations are easily eliminated with careful management and properly selected insecticides.

Hug Your African Violets

By Ruth Coulson

Enjoy a free download from www.africanvioletsforeveryone.net

Environmentalists are sometimes spoken of (unkindly) as “tree-huggers.” There can’t be anything wrong with loving plants and wanting to protect them. Actually, I don’t hug trees – but I do hug African violets...well sort of...

Plants can be some of our best friends ever. They are beautiful. They help oxygenate the atmosphere. They are quiet. You can share all your secrets with them and they never tell. They cheer you up when you feel blue, and so on and so on. So many very good reasons to hug your African violets. I do it myself. Quite often, in fact. If you think you would look really silly hugging a plant, here is the way I go about it, and why.

If you think you would look really silly hugging a plant, here is the way I go about it and why.

Do you remember that minor root disturbance usually gives the plant a boost in growth? When you repot, for instance, even if you try not to disturb the roots, the plant seems to grow on speedily from that time. I find the same thing happens if you leach, which in itself is a minor disturbance of the roots. I have been told that a plant dropped on the ground will often have a growth spurt to follow, although as you might imagine I don’t make a practice of doing that.

Even if it isn’t repotting time, you can give your

African violets a growth boost. Every time I pick up one of my plants, I gently squeeze the pot. This loosens the potting mix and stimulates the roots in much the same way as a careful repotting does. And, it is so easy. If you pick up a plant to groom it, to water it, or simply to admire it, give it a squeeze. It’s a little hug. I believe the plants really appreciate it.

Some growers have told me that they don’t like to leach their plants because it might compact the growing medium. So what is the solution? Give them a squeeze after leaching to loosen the mix again.

When you need to remove a few outside leaves this can leave a short bit of exposed stem. You can either top up the potting mix a little – or just squeeze the pot a few times to ruffle up the mix so it covers that tiny exposed area.

This is only really possible in modern day, thinner plastic pots. It is so good to find a reason to like these cheaper-type pots. Older pots, even plastic ones are too solid to squeeze. And another thing to remember is that all plastic pots do become brittle over time. Squeeze **gently** because cracking the pot would mean you had a potting session ahead. So, hug your plants. They will love you for it!

From her E-Newsletter: *The African Violet Way*

How I Grow *Petrocosmeas*

By Paul Susi

For the longest time in my gesneriad growing, I was unable to grow the plant that decorates a rock (petro = rock; cosmea = decorate). They simply refused to decorate my light stand! They would just sit there, grow a bit, and then die.

Petrocosmea flaccida was the first one I tried to grow, with continual lack of success. What was I doing wrong? Then I started listening to what Tim Tuttle was saying about petrocoseas. Tim, as many of you may know, has done quite a lot of research regarding what makes petrocoseas bloom, how they should be grown, what type of light they require, and so forth. In addition, he has done a fair amount of hybridizing with petrocoseas (many of his hybrids carry the alpha name "Keystone's").

Tim's first hybrid was *Petrocosmea* 'Rosemary Platz' in 2008. I realized early on that I was doing a few things wrong. My mix was too heavy and there was too much of it. Also, they didn't need all the light I had been giving them. Not only did I change these three aspects of my petrocosea culture, but I decided to do a little experimenting on my own.

What follows are some of the things I do to grow and flower petrocoseas. Keep in mind that you may not always have perfectly symmetrical plants (which seem to be the ideal) but you may indeed wind up with plants that are covered with bloom.

Mix and Potting

Since I grow all my gesneriads on capillary matting, the mix I use needs to be light. It turns out that petrocoseas require an even lighter mix, which I achieve by adding extra perlite and vermiculite to my (approximately) 1:1:1 mix (usually a commercial mix, to which I also add a bit of dolomitic lime). There is so much perlite that I have to make sure to use top dressing for shows, or I will receive the dreaded "Soil surface is distracting" comment! Petrocoseas do not require much mix when they are potted up since they have shallow

roots. What I usually do is place a layer of small aquarium gravel at the bottom of a shallow pot (after using a layer of paper towel to block the drainage holes) - about 1/3 of the pot is gravel. Then come the mix and the plant. I try to have the root ball touching the gravel, since the goal is to mimic the natural growing conditions - decorating a rock and not buried in mix.

Temperature, Water and Light

Petrocoseas grow in shady, moist environments at about 1,200 to 3,000 feet in southern China and northern Vietnam. Yes, that means cool, but not cold. When I visited southern China in 2014, we were told that temperatures could reach the upper 80s during the summer and close to, or below freezing, during the winter.

The temperature in my basement (where the petrocoseas are grown) ranges from a low of approximately 55°F in the winter to a high of 85°F in the summer, with no negative effects on the plants. The capillary matting is watered when it is still damp and sometimes when it gets completely dry, so the petrocoseas do stay moist most of the time.

Although I grow under T8 tubes, I use only two tubes on the petrocosea shelf. The tubes are approximately 12" above the tops of the plants.

Flowering

Many growers have commented on the need for a cold spell to encourage petrocoseas to set bloom and flower. However, I have not found this to be the case. My plants begin blooming at the end of summer (when temperatures do not get lower than 70°F in the basement). It could be that just a slight drop from the warmer temperatures of summer is the reason for bloom.

I do, however, grow all the petrocoseas on the lowest shelf, where it is most likely a few degrees cooler than on the upper shelves. Since I haven't performed any controlled experiments, I don't know what the main factor is. I do know that it is

not fertilizer, since I am not at all consistent with fertilizing. I fertilize maybe two or three times a year, half strength, with tomato fertilizer, and wet the mats with the fertilizer water.

Experiments

My primary experiment involves dramatically changing how petrocosmeas are potted up. I now grow a number of them in 4" clay saucers, which are placed directly on the capillary matting. There is very little mix in the shallow saucer and the rootball of the plant is surrounded by aquarium gravel. I have had great success in growing flat symmetrical petrocosmeas this way and also blooming plants. When a small plant is first placed in the saucer, it is important to keep an eye on the condition of the soil, since it will have a tendency to dry out (capillary action seems slow at this point). This led me to my second experiment - watering the plants in the saucers from the top by pouring small amounts of water over the leaves

and the mix. There was no apparent damage to the leaves and the saucer remained moist. As the plant grows in diameter, the mix in the saucer will remain moist and top watering will no longer be necessary. The one drawback to this method of growing is making sure that you don't lose your label!

I think that everyone should try their hand at growing petrocosmeas. Apartment growers especially should not be put off by temperature or humidity requirements. They are not as challenging as one might be led to believe and a petrocosmea with a full head of bloom is a beautiful sight.

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Karyn Cichocki, Editor.



Petrocosmea forrestii grown by La Donna Hopson - Bob Stewart photo.



Petrocosmea 'Keystone's Little Rascal' grown by Steve Kerr - Mel Grice photo



Petrocosmea 'Keystone's Blue Jay' grown by Beverley Williams - Mel Grice photo

AVSA Convention 2017 Judges Breakfast Notes

Orlando, Florida • By Paul Kroll

One of the most important programs on the convention schedule each year is the judges breakfast. This is the only real opportunity for AVSA Judges to get together and to ask questions of Bill Foster, Shows and Judges Chair and his committee. There is a box on or near the registration table into which anyone can put questions to be covered at the judges breakfast. Some years there are more questions than others, but this year there were many.

The judges breakfast and questions/discussions are for the purpose of clarification and continuity in judging.

After returning home, I typed up my notes from that meeting and sent them off to the Shows and Judges Committee and to some of my AVSA friends who are judges, but were unable to attend. The questions, answers and points covered are essential to interpret the latest instructions and the oldest of instructions. Nearly all the questions can be answered by the advice Bill often gives, "Read the HANDBOOK"!

It seems that most years the same judges judge the same class(es) at convention. Can this be changed?

Some changes will be made in the future. Bill strives to assign judges where they claim they have expertise.

Mary Corondan assured us that there will be better organization of the Judges and Clerks instructions. It is planned to email the lead judge on each team of their assignments ahead of the convention. All the information for each team will be in a manila envelope with the team names of judges and clerks on the outside.

Judges and clerks requesting assignments for the convention show will be asked for their cell phone numbers at the time of application. Bill Foster prefers that requests be made by email, since it is easiest for him to respond that he has received your request.

Meredith Hall receives the Collection Sheets and

quite often there will be duplicate scores. Bill requests that fractions be used, especially above 95 points, so that duplicate scores are avoided.

A judge recently refused to judge designs where the AVs were not named. Wrong. Sometimes, the show schedule does not require a card identifying plant material used in designs, so why have the AV named?

Regarding container gardens, Bill stressed again that your best AV should be entered into the horticulture division of the show. It is possible to use an "inferior" AV in container gardens: a trailer with 1 or 2 crowns, etc. Remember the scale and proportion of your garden. Do not use large AVs. Bill also reiterated the fact that the blooming AV in any container garden just needs to be there. It does not need to be front-and-center, nor does it have to be the focal point. It can be hidden somewhere in the landscape plan.

Be careful when judging container gardens. The plant material is often too high and out of scale and proportion. Remember that the height of a planting must be achieved by plant material and not by an accessory such as a rock or piece of wood. Landscape plans need to have hills, valleys, etc. and flat landscapes are not as interesting as those which have the mountains and valleys, etc.

AVs entered into the unusual/decorative container classes must be named, as it is possible that one of those plants could be best in show, with rescoring the AV separate from the container. READ THE HANDBOOK! It is allowed to have "ground cover" (i.e. sphagnum moss) in an unusual or decorative container to cover the soil. No other growing plant material is allowed.

The Handbook states that air bubbles may add to the attraction in an underwater arrangement. At a recent show, one judge refused to judge an underwater arrangement because it had bubbles in it. READ THE HANDBOOK!

The wording regarding the size of standard AVs is being reworked. It is imperative to know that no standard sized plant is to be eliminated from consideration for a prize, no matter what its diameter. Points may be deducted (up to 3), but the plant should NEVER be eliminated. The final wording will appear in the September-October issue of the AVM.

One question stated that "design judging is atrocious"; poor designs are being awarded prizes and good designs are not. Awarding prizes to undeserving design entries is wrong. Remember that the Elements and Principles of Design should be utilized when judging and the exhibits point scored if necessary. Design should be covered in the judging schools and most often is not.

A question was asked about an *Episcia* in the show that was in a pot and exhibited in a domed container. This is allowed, with the cover being removed briefly for judging purposes and then replaced.. Some gesneriads need that extra humidity. READ THE HANDBOOK!

There is an error in the narration on the DVD on *Saintpaulia* species. It is erroneously stated that trailing types of *Saintpaulia* species are sometimes considered for the Best Trailer award. This is wrong. The term trailer refers to hybrid trailers. Species are species, regardless of type. READ THE HANDBOOK!

All collections must be point scored! Occasionally, scores of 100 points are awarded. It is extremely rare that there would be a perfect plant. Exceedingly high scores are difficult to deal with. READ THE HANDBOOK!

Are records kept of the show reports and collection sheets, judges, etc. kept by AVSA? No records are kept, but the schedule approver can usually answer any questions if asked within a reasonable period of time.

If there are errors found on the SSA score sheet, they should be reported to the judges who signed it.

If the SSA score sheet is not returned, the judges who signed it cannot use that show to document their judging experience.

Judges should be certain that they sign each collection sheet and the SSA award before leaving the show.

Is it possible new introductions may be entered by number only, as opposed to having the hybridizer's name on the tag? Yes, that is the way it used to be done and can still be done that way.

It is emphasized that clerks in AVSA shows should not be outspoken. They may be asked by the judges for information, etc.

If a person taking the judging school does not yet have their required blue ribbons, do they have to wait? Yes. The credentials and judges card will be held until the required ribbon documentation is received by Bill Foster.

Might it be possible to have a 3 x 5 card placed with the plant(s) entered into the sport or mutant class listing the description of the original plant? This would help the judges to know just what the original plant looked like if they are not familiar with it. A 3 x 5 card may be placed by any exhibit to clarify any point the exhibitor wants the judges to know.

If one judge on a panel of three is called away, or has to leave, another judge should be appointed to replace that person so that the panel of three would be maintained.

Winston Goretsky explained that the electronic (pdf) version of the HANDBOOK is not "writeable". It is not possible to type in corrections and/or your personal notes. When official corrections or changes are made, they will – as always – be printed in the Shows and Judges column of the AVM and then new pages for the loose-leaf HANDBOOK will be printed and made available.

AVSA Collection sheets must be made available to the judges before final awards are chosen. This is the only way that judges can be sure that the highest scoring plant(s) are properly awarded.

Might it be possible for the timing to achieve the highest judging status be changed? Bill Foster said that this can be investigated, but he reminded everyone that so many judges do not pay attention to their own personal schedule. Many judges could have applied for the senior exam, etc. years before they actually do. Keep track of your schools, exams and years of service so that your rank will be accomplished in the shortest amount of time.

Mary Corondan stated that she can no longer accept the entire printout of the show awards from

affiliates. This requires her to search for the proper awards she needs. Since that is no longer an option, PLEASE USE THE FORM PROVIDED in the AVSA packet for your reports. The form may be sent via snail mail, scanned and sent via email or even a photo of it taken on your phone and sent via email. It is also possible to send them to the website: avsa.org

Judges were admonished to judge what you see. So often judges are overheard saying something like, "We have seen that grown better". This is wrong. Although we all remember those outstanding plants we have seen, we must judge what we

see and not against what we remember.

All judges need refresher courses! All judges are encouraged to attend a school now and then to refresh their minds. Barb Werness receives an occasional request for a copy of the senior exam from individuals who believe in continuing education. These people do not have to return the exam, but it is a good way to keep informed.

Bill Foster's Column is the official place for changes and additions and clarifications to be published. This article is merely to bring all the issues from the discussion at the judges breakfast to the attention of all judges. READ THE HANDBOOK!



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

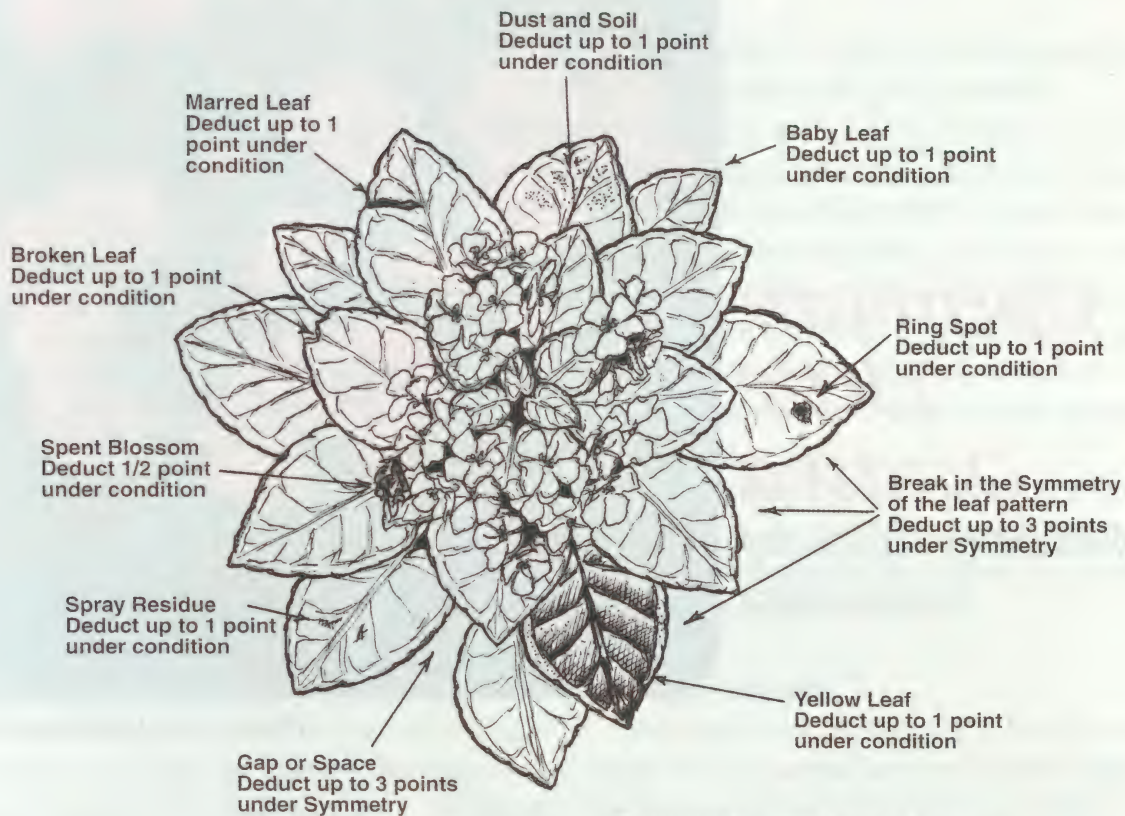
Dean's Rosalie

Hybridized by: K. Hobbs-Gregg

Exhibited by: Penny Kerker-Smith

Miniature

Judging a Showplant



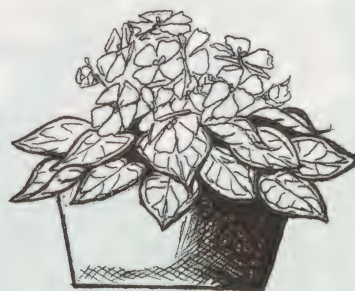
Symmetry - the shape of the plant
Condition - cultural aspect of the
plant at the time it is judged



Plant not centered in pot
Deduct up to 3 points
under condition



Neck
Deduct up to
3 points
under condition



Over potted
Deduct up to 3 points
under condition



Under potted
Deduct up to 3 points
under condition

*Optimara
Little
Ottawa*

*Hybridized by: Holtkamp
Semiminature*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



*Optimara
Little Ruby*

*Best Other Gesneriad
Exhibited by: Kathy Lahti
Miniature*

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Moisturizers for African Violets

By Margaret Taylor

Throughout our hot summers we are regularly told to keep up our fluid intake in order to avoid heat exhaustion. African violets likewise will dry out and wilt very quickly if they are not regularly hydrated. This does not mean they like to be kept in conditions that are too wet. More is often as bad as less. Try for the happy medium!

When temperatures soar, most times the humidity is raised too. African violets can deal with higher than normal heat if the humidity is also a factor. They may not be happy but they will usually cope until temperatures reduce to a comfortable level.

Occasionally in summer, we encounter some periods when the humidity drops to a very low level. These are the high fire-danger days in hot climates. In winter, home environments may also be a low humidity factor, in that drier than usual air is created by heaters and air conditioners.

When threatened with very dry heat, our plants will benefit from a fine spray from an atomizer of warm water. This is best done in the middle of the day, not when temperatures are dropping.

Benefits of condensation.

There are some cultural instances when it is important to raise the humidity to a higher level than usual. When an African violet has been repotted, it sometimes happens that it shows its distress with flagging, floppy leaves. The plant can usually be saved by placing it in a clear container or closed inflated plastic bag for a few weeks, being careful that excessive condensation is wiped away from inside the container. Potting a crown with no

roots or a plant that has had a long neck removed will also benefit with this treatment.

When tiny seedlings have been pricked out in tiny individual containers, they need what might be termed a "humidity crib" to give them a good start. A lidded clear plastic microwave container is useful here. Then the tiny seedlings are usually ready to face the world in about three weeks. Just remove the lid for half a day at a time to allow them to harden off a little before subjecting to strong light.

Some growers like to grow their leaves for propagation in a closed humid environment. Again, less moisture showing in the container is better than more.

Powdery mildew.

This may be a problem at a change of season when we see warm days and cooler nights. Good ventilation for part of the day may help or running a small fan for larger collections should prevent the use of fungicides. Try to keep leaves clean of powdery mildew by gently brushing or wiping with a soft cloth. (Away from other plants!)

Be vigilant.

As with all methods of plant culture it pays to be vigilant and to pay attention to problems as soon as they occur.

Happy growing!

From *The African Violet*,
News Magazine of the
AV Association of Australia



Honoring Our Members

Honorary One-Year Memberships

Recipient: Sharon Shannon

The African Violet Society of America would like to thank Sharon Shannon for her outstanding leadership as Convention Chair for the 2016 AVSA Convention: "Violets Color the Land of Enchantment" in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For her service, she is receiving an AVSA One-Year Honorary Membership.

Recipient: Kathy Bell

The African Violet Society of America would like to thank Kathy Bell for her outstanding leadership as Show Chair for the 2016 AVSA Convention: "Violets Color the Land of Enchantment" in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

For her service, she is receiving an AVSA One-Year Honorary Membership.

Recipient: Dave Harris

The next recipient has improved the overall quality and beauty of the Gesneriad plant *Sinningia* over the past six (6) to ten (10) years with his hybridizing of the Ozark Series of the *Sinningia*. He supports the AVSA membership with his commercial sales of African violets and other gesneriads at the conventions.

In recognition of his achievements, Dave Harris is awarded an AVSA One-Year Honorary Membership.

Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Award

Recipient: Mel Grice

The recipient of the Mabel & Glenn Hudson Memorial Award is a member of both the Dayton and Cincinnati African Violet Societies. He is a Senior Judge and is currently serving on the AVSA Special Awards Committee; he has served as AVSA Affiliate Chair, on the Board of Directors and the Nominating Committee.

True legend has it that he has been growing violets since he was ten years old. He has served as President of the Dayton AVS from 2010 through 2012, and as President of the Cincinnati AVS from 2014-2015 (and part of 2016). He has also served as Program Chair for Dayton AVS and Vice-President of Programs for Cincinnati AVS. During his service in Dayton AVS and under his promotional leadership, the club more than doubled its membership, growing from ten (10) members to twenty-five (25) members.

He is a member of the Ohio State Judges Council and the Ohio State AVS. As a "teacher" in the Gesneriad Society, he has consistently provided 'hands-on' education on a variety of topics, including 'other' gesneriads. As a grower, he is always generous with starter plants, donating generously to new club members and those from the general public who show interest.

He is also a great designer, providing programs on 'design' for Judges Council and various AVSA clubs, and 'fills in' when programs are needed at the last minute. He continually promotes AVSA and its many clubs through his publications, as an editor of "The Violet Connection" in the Ohio State Magazine for more than ten years, and as a contributor to the Gesneriad column in the *African Violet Magazine*. He has been described by many as a 'wonderful worker when needed,' and a 'wonderful promoter for AVSA and local affiliates.' Please join me in recognizing Mel Grice as the 2017 recipient of the Mabel and Glenn Hudson Memorial Award.

Honorary Lifetime Membership

Recipient: Winston Goretsky

Our outgoing AVSA President received the Honorary Lifetime Membership for serving as AVSA President for the years 2015-2017.





Photo Credit: Patrick Delaney

‘Wizard’s Froststrike’

Plant grown by: Patrick Delaney

Hybridized by: S. Jones

Small Standard

Diary of a Nervous Novice

By Christopher Paiva

If I were to plot my early beginnings as an African violet grower, it would start with a small blue and white striped NOID plant purchased at my local supermarket. It was just captivating and striking in color and form. I kept it near the windowsill in my living room. The plant grew symmetrical and didn't require much of my care. It bloomed for long periods of time and actually looked very content.

That was three years ago. My experience suggests that once you've learned how to keep one African violet plant alive, you'll wind up wanting to grow more of them. It almost becomes an obsession with AV growers. My collection began to increase. I learned techniques in wick watering, soil mixtures, fertilizers, and fluorescent lighting.

I was growing in experience just as my plants grew in size, health and vigor.

The roots of my green thumb were laid in childhood. My grandmother grew African violets, always careful never to spot the plain green leaves with water, and she grew in the north window of her home. She taught me how to propagate in water, and pot up her plants. She always gave me a plant or two but I usually killed them in less than a month's time due to overwatering or neglect.

I kept my African violet habits to myself for a while, largely because I didn't feel like I was much of a grower, but also because I didn't find many people interested in my new-found hobby. Soon, I found there were a large number of people who were AV enthusiasts on social media, and some

belonged to clubs. As I became more confident and knowledgeable, I joined the African Violet Society of American and Bay State AVS. I attended two of the AV shows at Tower Hill and by the second show, I wanted to grow them to show but still felt inadequate and just lacked the confidence that my plants weren't worthy of exhibiting.

This year, with sheer dread and trepidation, I exhibited four of my Buckeye AVs at the 55th Annual African Violet Show. Surprisingly, I did rather well, but much of it I contribute to beginner's luck. The best part of the entire experience was being part of a great group of people who are all so supportive, dedicated, and share a commonality for the love of African violets.

Admittedly, I killed many plants along the way. I look back on my early plant disasters and know far more about why they died and what I did wrong as a result. Now, my successes outweigh my failures. I advise reading up on AVs to avoid the pitfalls.

Join a local African violet group where you can learn from other growers, attend lectures by the experts, and develop friendships who share a common interest. My advice is to never give up; use what you've learned to give another go at it!

"A man who never made mistakes, never made anything."

From Ye Bay Stater,
publication of the *Bay State AVS*



A Fond Farewell From Longtime Chairman of the AVSA Library Committee

Anne Nicholas

To our of many AVSA friends, I remember clearly a phone call from Jack Wilson, the then President of AVSA, on a Sunday afternoon. Jack asked if I would consider being the Chairman of the AVSA Library Committee. I knew nothing about the duties of the committee, and I had no clue the wonderful friendships that would follow. I called Joyce Stork. She said that I needed a guy named Tom Glembocki on the committee. When I called this person, he said "35 mm slides, wasn't that was used in the past century?" I knew immediately that he was the perfect person to lead us forward. He and Libbie showed up at the Washington DC show and had their digital camera busy while the lineup of 35 mm photographers did their 'thing.' One cannot imagine the time it took to sort through the massive quantity of 35 mm slides to select the best ones for the slide show. The array filled our whole dining room table. And little did I know that he and Libbie would become such great friends, that they would fly to Denton to be the photographers for our daughter's wedding! Violet friends are truly the best friends!

At the Tulsa show, we introduced our first CDs. One was about *'The Pittman Way of Growing,'* and the other was the AVSA Show itself. We continued to promote CDs for the next few years, with the Tucson show, the Reno show, and the Cherry Hill Show. Then we moved into the production of DVDs – the Austin show, the

Nashville show, the Kansas City Show, and the Albuquerque show. We put the Albuquerque show on both a DVD and a thumb-drive format. At the Austin show, Andrea Worrell and Tom produced and sold a DVD about our Commercial growers. This last year (2017 AVSA Albuquerque Show) we also produced a thumbdrive of Debbie McGinnis' delightful presentation on her way of growing. Andrea Worrell and Joe Bruns are currently working on a new DVD that will be a tribute to Hortense and Ray Pittman, and their tremendous impact on our violet world. Andrea also has a wonderful assortment of videos from the Nashville show to showcase the impact of the Holtkamp family on the violet world.

This committee of Marjorie Bullard, Barbara Burde, Janet Castiglione, Paula Bal, Penny Smith-Kerker, Julie Jones, Richard Nicholas, Tom Glembocki, and Libbie Glembocki, have not only brought us into the digital age of the 21st century, but they have blessed me with a beautiful bouquet of friendships.

I have been so honored to serve as the Chairman of this AVSA Library Committee. I am doubly honored to pass the reins to Penny Kerker-Smith and her Co-chair, Paula Bal. I know the AVSA Library Committee is in excellent hands. Penny and Paula will blast us into a new age of offerings and excellence. I welcome this new AVSA Library Committee Team.



African Violets and Cats

By Carol J. Schorn

Quite a few of us share our homes with both of those delightful things, cats and African violets. Sometimes the intersection of cats and African violets produces fun things like violets named for cats (*'Rob's Mad Cat'* and *'Bob's Purrty Purple'* come to mind) but sometimes cats and African violets mix less gracefully. With some of those "less graceful" times in mind, here are some of the problems that may arise, along with a few ideas and information to keep the plants and cats' safe, and the violet grower sane.

First, never assume that your cat, which should be a carnivore, may not suddenly decide that he or she is at least also partly herbivorous. This tends to happen most when you have just brought in a particularly beautiful new plant, or when you are preparing to take plants to a show, but it may happen at any time. Fortunately for cats, African violets are non-toxic. Unfortunately for the violets, they don't apparently taste bad to cats. For anyone who might like to check on which other plants are safe or not safe for cats, one website with that information is: <http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants>

Even if your cat doesn't think your shelves of violets are a salad bar, he or she may succumb to the desire to do physics experiments with them. E.g. "Hmm... how many times do I need to tap this plant pot with my paw to overcome the co-efficient of friction, slide the pot along the shelf, and drop it over the edge, so it goes crash onto the floor?"

Your cat may decide to vary this experiment by tipping over not just plant pots, but filled reservoirs or temporarily placed containers of other liquids, so that they can study the flow rate as the liquid pours onto the floor. The cat can then also study the absorptive quality of the carpet, or the way a non-carpeted floor channels the spilled liquid.

Then there is walking with a box or tray of plants at the same time that your cat decides that he or she MUST, at that moment, dart between

your legs. The cat can then watch both the human and the plants hit the ground.

Your cat may become a danger to your violets even inadvertently: if the cat is indoor/outdoor, he or she may bring in plant pests or diseases in their fur.

And although, as mentioned above, African violets aren't poisonous, they may still be a source of danger to a cat. Even cats that aren't interested in tasting the violets may decide to sample other things associated with them.

A few years ago, my new kitten had been home only days when I was top-watering a shelf of violets late one evening, using a baster and a cup of fertilizer water. Reaching up and facing away to reach the plants farthest from me, I suddenly realized that the "lap-lap-lap" of a cat drinking something was way too close - her water bowl was in another room. I glanced down to see the kitten's nose buried in the cup of fertilizer water, which she had jumped up to reach. And of course, this was late at night, so I couldn't just call my vet and see if this counted as a poisoning emergency or not. I decided to play it safe, so I made the acquaintance of one of the Veterinary Poison Control centers that night. Luckily for the kitten, and me the vet at the Poison Control Center determined that the dilution of the brand of fertilizer I was using was probably low enough not to be toxic to a healthy young cat. He simply advised me to give her a few spoonfuls of milk to coat her stomach, and then to watch her for a couple of hours.

Of course, when using any sort of pesticide in a house with a cat, exercise great caution and read labels carefully. Even common household products may be dangerous. An example is that Lysol, sometimes used as a spray to treat powdery mildew, is toxic to cats.

An important note: if you suspect your pet has been poisoned, call your vet or a Veterinary Poison Control center BEFORE leaving your house or

doing anything else. You don't want to make a bad situation worse by giving incorrect first aid. And with some toxins, every second counts, and appropriate first aid, directed by a vet and given by you, may save your pet's life or buy enough time for you to reach your vet. If directed to proceed to your vet's office, take the container of the suspected poison with you—the vet will need to see the ingredients and amounts as listed on the label.

If you ever need to reach a Veterinary Poison Control facility after your vet's regular hours, below are two phone numbers. Both are available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

ASPCA National Animal Poison Control Center at 1-888-426-4435. Their website says that a \$65 fee may be charged to your credit card.

The other center is the Pet Poison Helpline, at 1-855-764-7661. Their \$59 fee, payable by credit card, covers the initial call, and any necessary follow-up calls on that particular case.

One of the simplest and most effective ways to avoid most of the potential "cats and violets" issues is to have a "plant room" where the cat is not allowed to enter. But for some of us, including me, that is just not practical.

Since my cat regards my violets as edibles or toys, I had to learn, years ago, how to keep her out of them. At first, I had little success - I couldn't train her to stay away from them. Repeated "No!" and "Get down!" were ineffective. The double-stick tape which one cat book recommended, as something cats don't like to walk on, had no effect. Putting citrus-scented objects, which cats aren't supposed to like the smell of, on the shelves, also

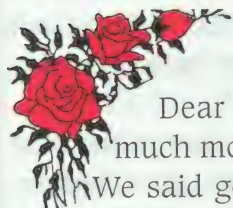
was no use. I finally decided that a physical barrier would have to be used.

I immediately rejected any sort of opaque barrier, as that would keep me from seeing the plants. Clear plastic, such as a drop cloth, could be shredded by claws, wouldn't stand up to pressure by paws or pounce, and would cut off good air circulation, possibly leading to powdery mildew issues. What finally occurred to me was to use hardware cloth. For anyone not familiar with this, it looks like a magnified, heavier version of the screen mesh used on window or door screens. The size I chose has the "holes" 1/4 inch wide, and comes on a roll two feet wide and five feet long. I have this wire mesh wrapped around each of my violet shelves on the sides accessible to my cat, with "doors" that allow me access, and are tied shut whenever I am not working with my plants. While it's no one's idea of "House Beautiful," it works. The large-size mesh admits light and air, but not kitty claws or teeth. My cat quickly quit trying after she found that she could no longer get at the plants or pots.

Lastly, I've learned that if I need to work on plants off the shelves, such as re-potting, or carry them through the house, the safest method is to put my cat in the bathroom first. Temporary confinement to the bathroom is made more bearable if a favorite treat or toy accompanies the cat into the bathroom.

Sometimes it takes extra forethought or effort, but the rewards of being able to keep our favorite furry plants and furry pets in the same house make it all worthwhile.

In Memory of Sharon Johnson



Dear friend, teacher, mentor, and much more all describe Sharon Johnson.

We said goodbye to this lovely lady July 27, 2017. Sharon was an AVSA Life Member, Master Judge and Teacher; member of the North Star AV Council, AVSA Judges Council of MN, and Gesneriad Society of MN; co-chair of the 2006 AVSA convention. She held many offices in all these organizations.

Sharon's unique sense of humor and direct way of expressing herself will always be remembered. She has been an inspiration for club members, young and old. She recently started hybridizing streptocarpus and club members are growing them out hoping for the perfect one to name in her honor. We cannot express the great loss we feel with her passing.

Thank you Sharon for everything you have given us; you will be missed.

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

African Violet Society of America, Inc.

May 31, 2017 • Orlando, Florida

Winston Goretsky, President, called the meeting of the Board of Directors of the African Violet Society of America to order at 9:05 a.m. in Salon E of the Wyndham Orlando Resort International Drive, Orlando, Florida. Linda Hall gave the invocation, and Dr. Richard Nicholas led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

In lieu of a roll call, a roster was circulated and signed by the following: Mmes. Anderson (Susan), Anderson (Jeri), Bal, Baldwin, Barlow, Berry, Burde, Carruth, Corondan, Hall, Hapner, Hill, Hoffmann, Ingle, Jones (Julie), Lahti, Lombard, McInnis, McIntosh, Miller, Nicholas (Anne), Nofziger, Post, Ramser (Sue), Riemer, Rourke, Rumsey, Semrau, Smith - Kerker, Williams, Wilson, Pratt and Mssrs. Bruns, Davidson (Ron), Foster, Goretsky, Nicholas (Richard), Price, and Cenci (Al). The following were excused: Broadway, Carter (John), Ohme, Ramser (Charles), Rowe, Stork, Sutton, Moreno, and Turner. Director nominees and AVSA Past Presidents were introduced as well as Maureen Pratt who was filling in for Joyce Stork who was unable to attend.

Mary Corondan, Secretary, stated there was a quorum present. She read the Standing Rules for this meeting, and they were adopted. Mary Corondan made the motion the agenda be adopted with the correction that Sue Ramser's name should replace that of Leonard Re on the Committee to Approve the 2016 minutes. The agenda was adopted as amended.

President Goretsky announced a short break at 10:30 a.m., lunch from 12:15 - 1:30 p.m., and expected recess by 5:00 p.m.

President Goretsky appointed the Committee to Approve the 2017 Minutes of this meeting: Candace Baldwin; Chair; Penny Smith - Kerker; and Carol Semrau. Debbie McInnis was appointed Timekeeper. Winston Goretsky appointed the

Tellers: Anne Nicholas, Chair; Paula Bal; and Cindi Nofziger. Susan Hill, Chair of the 2016 Committee to Approve, reported the minutes were approved.

Since Convention Director, Kathy Lahti, needed to leave for the rest of the day to go on a tour, she presented her report early in the agenda. She also announced several room location changes made by the hotel. Kathy Lahti then made the following motion.

Motion #10 - I move that the AVSA Board approve the following individuals to lead the 2018, AVSA - AVSC Buffalo, New York Convention: Convention Chairs, Judy Niemira (AVSA) and Julie Thompson (AVSC); and Show Chairs, Deb Donaldson (AVSA) and Bev Williams (AVSC). The motion was adopted.

The resignation of Linda Rowe, Director, was announced by President Goretsky. The Nominating Committee selected Maureen Pratt to fill the remaining two - year term as a Director. She was elected to serve by voice vote.

The Executive Committee elected Debbie McInnis to serve as Chair of the Nominating Committee for 2017 - 2018. The following individuals are not eligible as they served on the committee last year: Bill Foster, Pat Hancock, Cindi Nofziger, and Steve Turner. The following individuals were nominated: Candace Baldwin (AZ), Renee Wilson (CA), Paula Bal (NJ), and Ron Davidson (TX). These four candidates were elected to serve on the Nominating Committee by voice vote.

The Executive Committee met on Tuesday, and Mary Corondan presented the Executive Committee recommendations.

Motion #1 - P&P, page 95, Section 7. Standing Committees be revised to read: KK. Violet Preservation Committee and p. 95, Section 7, KK., 1. Purpose, a. The preservation and restoration of older African Violet cultivars, those that

are ten (10) years or older, and to make them available to the members at large. The motion was adopted.

Motion #2 - P&P, page 95, Section 7. Standing Committees, KK., 2. Duties of Chair to delete B. Shall prepare a report for AVM regarding Vintage Violets when appropriate, and to revise c. to read: Shall create and maintain up - to - date files or database on cultivars available and the names and addresses of the growers, and to reword d. to state: Shall create and maintain a list or database of the plants wanted by members and advertise them in the AVM or on the AVSA website when appropriate. The motion was adopted.

Motion #4 - P&P, page 23, Section 4 Office Information, D. Responsibilities of Office Manager, to insert 6: Shall shred any financial documents over seven years old. The motion was adopted.

Motion #4 - P&P, page 40, Section 5. Officers and Directors, K. Death, 1., be revised to read: The Executive Committee should be notified as soon as possible upon the death of a member of the Board of Directors, past President, Bronze Medal recipient, or Hall of Fame recipient; and further that 2. be modified to read: 2. For an AVSA officer, past President, Bronze Medal recipient, or Hall of Fame recipient, the Courtesy Chair, on behalf of the Board of Directors, shall send flowers to the home of the deceased or to the funeral, as well as a note of sympathy to the family. The motion was adopted.

Motion #5 - P&P, page 43, Section 6, C. Editor, f., be revised to read: Shall write a column in at least three (3) issues of the AVM including the March, July, and November issues; and further that page 79, Section 7, Z. Publications committee, 2. Duties of the Chair, a., be eliminated. The motion was adopted.

Motion #6 - P&P, page 79, Section 7., Z. Publications Committee, 2. Duties of the Chair, c., and page 80, f., be eliminated. The motion was adopted.

Motion #7 - P&P, page 79, Section 7., Z. Publications Committee, 2. Duties of the Chair, d., be eliminated. The motion was adopted.

Motion #8 - P&P, page 16, Section 3 Financial Information, C. Office Bank Account, 1., be

modified to read: A depository and checking account combined shall be maintained for depositing all monies received by the AVSA office. Checks may be written on this account for all operating expenses. Checks shall be signed by the Office Manager or an Officer. The motion was adopted.

Terri Post, Finance Committee Chair, reported on the proposed 2017 - 2018 budget.

Motion # 9 - I move the adoption of the 2017 - 2018 budget as emailed. The motion was adopted.

Convention Show Awards Chair, Linda Hall, reported.

Motion #11 - On behalf of the Convention Show Awards Committee, I move to amend the P&P, p. 61, Section 7 Standing and Special Committees, O. Convention Show Awards, 1. Duties of Chair, b., as follows: Shall request the Office Manager deposit in the convention show awards account the amount of the applicable AVSA sponsored show awards two weeks prior to each convention. Any of these AVSA monies not awarded at the show shall then be returned to the AVSA Office Manager following the show. All other donated monies not awarded shall remain in the Convention Show Awards bank account to be used for awards in the following years, if needed. All specified awards not awarded after five years will go back into the awards account as an undesignated award. Additional money from the same donor for the same specific variety in successive years will not be accepted if the award is not issued. The motion was adopted.

Maureen Pratt reported for the Membership and Promotion Committee.

Motion #12 - On behalf of the Membership and Promotion Committee, I move that the Board of Directors offer a discount of \$250 on Life Memberships for individuals who are 50 years old and older. The motion was adopted.

Dr. Richard Nicholas reported for the Scholarship Committee.

Motion #13 - On behalf of the Scholarship Committee, I move acceptance from the Board of Ms. Caitlin Edsall for the Boyce Edens AVSA College Scholarship of \$1,000 for academic year 2017 - 2018, to be administered by Texas A & M

in one \$500 payment for the Fall Semester, 2017 and the other \$500 payment for the Spring Semester, 2018. The motion was adopted.

On behalf of the Bylaws Committee, Sue Ramser reported.

Motion #14 - On behalf of the Bylaws Committee, I move that Article III Membership and Dues, Section 2 Membership, 2., be modified to read: **Associate Member:** any individual who pays half the dues required for individual membership and who receives no magazine.

*(In the current Bylaws, it reads: 2. **Associate Member:** any one person living at the same address as a person having any other class of membership and paying half the dues required for individual membership.)*

Rationale: There are an increasing number of individuals who would like to belong to AVSA and support the work of AVSA, but have little interest in receiving a paper copy of the magazine. International members sometimes receive the magazine so late that the website passwords are out of date. If adopted, this will allow both the traditional member and the member who prefers an electronic lifestyle to have what they desire.

Discussion followed on the ramifications of Associate Members who are judges receiving updates in the Handbook that are found in the Shows and Judges column of the *African Violet Magazine* as well as Associate Members having access to passwords to be used on the website when there is no magazine subscription.

Barbara Burde moved that the motion be tabled until some of the ramifications are worked out. Barbara Burde then amended her motion to state that it be referred to the committee for review. The amended motion was seconded and adopted.

Linda Hall recognized Mary Corondan for her work on the newly updated P&P.

President Goretsky recognized the Retiring Directors: Paula Bal, Diane Miller, BJ Ohme, Linda Rowe, Steve Turner, and Glenda Williams and Retiring Committee Chairs: John Carter, Technology & Tinari Fund Advancement; Mel Grice, Affiliate Chair; Linda Hall, Convention Show Awards; Cindi Nofziger, Nominating Committee; and Janet Riemer, Open Forum.

President Goretsky stated that committee chair positions end with the term of the President. Some committee chairs have been shadowing retiring committee chairs for training purposes.

Janet Riemer announced that she is looking for a replacement or helper for her an Archivist. She is willing to train anyone.

Dr. Richard Nicholas, nominee for President stated that committee chair appointments would follow if he were elected. Debbie McInnis is currently shadowing Linda Hall, Convention Show Awards Chair.

President Goretsky stated the Executive Committee has been working on immediate and long term strategic planning that was initiated by Susan Anderson. This will give some momentum and direction. It will provide goal setting. At the fall Executive Committee meeting,

It is hoped the initial phase will be completed and information can be disseminated to the Board. One goal will be the 75th Anniversary that will be coming up.

Glenda Williams said the Ways and Means table and the Raffle table are good places for new directors to get involved and meet people. New directors are also encouraged to approach committee chairs as to their areas of expertise.

Dr. Richard Nicholas announced there is a preliminary invitation to bring the 2019 Convention to Texas with the Lone Star African Violet Council serving as the hosting affiliate. Anne Nicholas named some of the cities in Texas that were being considered.

Ron Davidson said that Hortense Pittman was in rehab after falling and fracturing her pelvis. It was added that Ray Pittman will be 100 years old this year.

There are 63 first time convention attendees at this convention. Dr. Bill Price said he would donate gesneriad cuttings to first time convention attendees in the future.

Diane Miller expressed concern that conventions be more centrally located in the country. Travel is an issue for vendors transporting plants. Dr. Nicholas said there is a movement underway to change from a n affiliate invitation model to an AVSA selected site where transportation is readily available and AVSA workers are utilized.

The new nominating committee members were asked to meet with Debbie McInnis immediately following the Board meeting.

As there was no further business to come before this meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Mary Corondan, Secretary

COMMITTEE TO APPROVE:

Candace Baldwin, Chair

Penny Smith - Kerker

Carol Semrau



Why Cull?

By Margaret Taylor

Why, indeed?

Most African violet growers find, at some stage, an over-whelming number of plants in their collection. Today so many "must have" varieties are available and difficult to pass up. Added to this, the ease of propagation and multiplication quickly develops into a population explosion.

How many of us can save only one plantlet off a clump?" At the very least, "a pair and a spare" may be more usual (and then some).

Much extra work in the general care of grooming, repotting, and keeping up the water supply is involved if standards are to be maintained. African violets will not grow well if they are overcrowded. They will either reach for the sky, or develop bunched-up tight centers. "No touch" spacing on the shelves is necessary for air circulation and to minimize the spread of pests and diseases.

Now and again, it is a good idea to take stock and ruthlessly discard any plant, which is sub-standard, passed its "use by" date, or will not grow nicely for you. The shy bloomers may be given verbal notice to perform or be sent to violet heaven. They probably do not warrant the space needed to sit and sulk. Sometimes a compulsory cull is unavoidable when mites or soil mealy bugs are running rampant. This is an unfortunate situation, but may be a blessing in disguise.

No point in treating sick plants and allowing them to remain with the rest of the collection, or you may just be prolonging the agony of disease

control. Look at the spaces you can create by saving a leaf, sterilizing it, and disposing of the remainder of the plant. In due course, you will have many pots of plantlets awaiting division. A strong will is needed here or you may once again be able to identify with the old woman who lived in a shoe.

Spring and autumn are the ideal times to repot; also a good time to cull. As you handle each plant, you can do a stern appraisal. It may help to develop a philosophy of "when in doubt throw it out." Much as we would like, it simply is not practicable to grow them all.

Those of us who are hybridizing know full well that most seedlings have to be discarded on first flowering. Some plants change their nature according to maturity and seasonal changes, so some seedlings must be allowed to stay until such time as this is known. If you could not bring yourself to cull with total objectivity, hybridizing would be likely to produce far too many problems for you.

Just as spring-cleaning the home is a necessary chore, it's a wonderful feeling when it is done. Likewise, with our violets, a good culling session will be most satisfying for a couple of weeks at least.

Happy Growing (and Culling).

From The African Violet,
The News Magazine of the
African Violet Association of Australia

When Variable Doesn't Mean Variable

By Pat Hancock

This discussion occurred after the recent show in mid-September and was impossible to publish in the September *Violet Connection*. By publishing the changes in the December edition, I afforded everyone nine months to understand the changes and adjust their plant selection to exhibit at the show. I feel that the show has been opened up for more opportunities to win top awards by ALL the growers. Happy Growing, Al Cenci President, OSAVS.

Recently there was a photo of a plant on the internet that had blooms that were not all the same, i.e. some had fantasy: some had thumb prints: some were plain. The hybridizer wanted opinions of what should be done with the plant. The suggestions covered a wider range of ideas including some from AVSA judges.

The "idea" that bothered me most was given by several people who said they were judges. The "idea" was that they should include the word "variable" in the description and that would make everything alright.

One person actually said, "when the judges see the word "variable" they will just ignore the fact that the blooms are all different."

This could not be more wrong. The word "variable" when included in the description of a plant has nothing at all to do with the blooms on an individual plant being different. The word simply means that not all plants of a given variety will bloom the same. This is often true of plants with

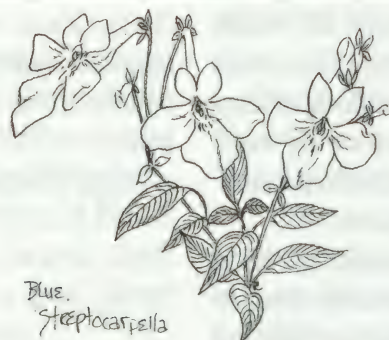
edges or fantasy markings. If the description has "variable" in it - classification will enter it in the class that it fits.

For example, a plant with the description: "Semidouble dark blue pansy, variable white edge. Dark green serrated. Standard." Since the word "variable" is in the description, the plant would be entered in to the "edge" class if it has the white edge and into the solid blue class if it does not. If the word "variable" is not in the description and it lacks the white edge - it might or might not get past classification and be entered.

When blooms on a plant are not all as described in the description - judges should deduct point for each bloom that is not true to the description up to 10 points. If there is anything else wrong with the plant, it could be a red or white ribbon plant depending on how many other deductions there are.

The word "variable" in the description has absolutely nothing to do with the color of blooms on an individual plant being different. They must be the same or points will be deducted. See page 39 of *The African Violet Society of America Handbook for Growers, Exhibitors, and Judges*. All judges should own and read this book and it is an invaluable tool for growers, exhibitors, and hybridizers as well.

From: *The Violet Connection*
Official Publication of the
Ohio State African Violet Society



Grooming Checklist for Show Plants

LEAVES:

1. Have you removed immature leaves? _____
2. Can you improve the symmetry by removing a leaf? _____
3. Are there limp or broken leaves? _____
4. Have you removed blemished leaves? _____

But don't remove a small or blemished leaf if it destroys the symmetry of your plant.

PLANT:

1. Is the plant central in the pot? _____
2. Is the plant over or under potted? _____
3. Have you removed any suckers? _____
4. Does the plant have a neck? _____
5. Have you removed leaf supports? _____

Remember it is not too late to repot your plant to correct the above faults.

CLEANLINESS:

1. Have you washed or brushed dust or soil particles from the leaves? _____
2. Are soil particles on petioles or stems? _____

3. Have you washed fertilizer or spray residue from leaves? _____
4. Is the pot clean? _____

BLOOMS:

1. Are all the blossoms fresh? _____
2. Have you removed all blossom stubs and pedicel stubs? _____
3. Have you removed stalks with only 1 or 2 blooms left? _____
4. Are all the blossoms the correct color? _____

Notes

If the plant looks good, is healthy and fresh and has a head of flowers, bring it along to the show. Don't judge your own plants too harshly. The above check list is to make sure you present your plant in the best way. No plant is perfect so bring yours along.

From The Newsletter of the
Early Morn African Violet Group, Inc.
Australia

2018 AVSA Article Contest

By Pat Hancock

The 2017 Article Contest was completed and the winners were announced at the Convention in Orlando, FL.

1st Place: Kurt Jablonski – "Grooming for Show"

2nd Place: Sandra Skalski – "How to Eliminate Thrips"

3rd Place: Sandy Mynatt – "Repotting: A Combat Sport"

Runners Up were Paul Kroll, Vickie Ferguson, and Carol Schorn.

The new Contest for 2018 has already started with the July/August issue.

We have new hybridizers who will supply the

prizes, and a new Judging Team. ***The 2018 Contest will end with the March/April issue of the AVM.***

In the May/June issue, somehow Barb Werness' name was not listed as one of the hybridizers for the 2018 Article Contest.

I am very excited to add Jay Sestico as one of the hybridizers for 2018. I had been hearing about him, and his gorgeous plants for some time. He hybridizes exciting new *Sinningia Speciosa* (aka Florist's Gloxinia), and he has agreed to be a part of the 2018 Contest.

So, start writing those articles and let's make our magazine even better.

Save the Wild Saintpaulia

Will the Wild African Violet Survive?

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By Pauline Bartholomew
and
The African Violet Society of America, Inc.
Revised 2008



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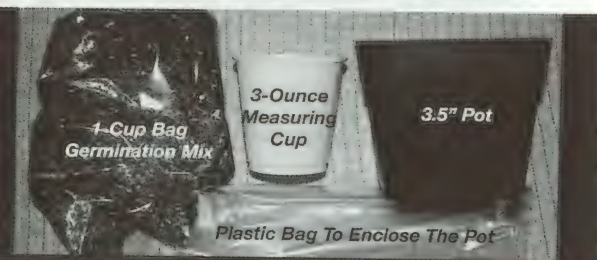
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African Violet

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Cajun Swamp Dancer

Exhibited and Hybridized by:

Belinda Thibodeaux

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

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Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the methods and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

President's Message

By Richard Nicholas, President

3113 Deerfield Dr. • Denton, TX 76208

Email: randanicho@aol.com

AVSA Friends:

Sadly, I am writing this column as we travel back from the memorial service for John Carter. Our AVSA family has suffered two great losses recently with the passing of Kent Stork and now in late August, the passing of former AVSA president John Carter. More information appears elsewhere in this magazine.

As most everyone knows, Hurricane Harvey brought three landfalls and record rainfall to the gulf coastal areas from Corpus Christi, TX into Louisiana. Vast areas were underwater. Cleanup and rebuilding will probably go on for many months and, in some cases, for years. The devastated area includes the city of Beaumont where our AVSA office is located. Fortunately, the office was not flooded, but we are concerned that there is likely to be roof damage. Many AVSA members and growers were affected.

To change the subject to more pleasant things, I have done something I thought I would never do! I am now on Facebook. I assure each reader that this journey into social media is not so I can



use time to watch cute animal videos. It does, however, give me another way to stay in contact with all of AVSA. So, I hope every member will get on my "friend" list. I have also set up a new email account to be used entirely for violet and AVSA use in order to increase communication. Please feel free to contact me at txranviolets@gmail.com with ideas, questions, concerns, and thoughts. AVSA belongs to each of us.

Finally, the season for fall shows is upon us as I write and will be well underway as you read this. Not all members want to grow for show – and that is fine. Others are regulars at shows and they know how much work there is to do to be ready. In between are those who want to show but just aren't ready. My advice is to have courage and give it a try! No plant at home ever won a ribbon. In my own case, the first plants I ever entered were actually entered by my wife Anne, who snuck (sneaked?) them out of the house when I lacked the courage to enter. And that reminds me – I need to get some plant work done. Happy growing!

Violets connect us.



Editor's Notes

By Ruth Rumsey, AVM Editor

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: rrumsey@earthlink.net

This is probably the most difficult column I have written in the twenty-plus years that I have been the Editor of the *African Violet Magazine*.

I have decided that it is time for me to retire.

These past years, as Editor, and a grower, have been some of the best of my life. Having this wonderful publication to produce, and share with AVSA's many members, has been both a privilege and an honor.

I cannot take credit for all of the fine articles we've printed through these years; articles written by our members, our experts, those willing to try new things, new ways to grow, etc.

When I heard about a Secretary position opening, I came to work for AVSA. With two kids in college at the same time, I wanted to make some extra money. Thus began the lovely experience of being a part of this wonderful organization, with so many members dedicated to growing and sharing the African violet.

I made new friends, those whom I will always be in contact with, who have shared their expertise



with so many other African violet growers. I was fortunate to attend several Texas state African violet shows, and our National Conventions, continually learning on the way.

I was never brave enough to actually enter a plant in a show, but I have enjoyed watching the blossoms appear on my violets in our AVSA Office. Some of these plants, several years old, are still blooming.

I look forward to spending time with family, especially my grandkids and great nieces and nephews, and more trips to my favorite place, the beaches of Texas' Bolivar Peninsula.

Thank you for the wonderful friendships I have enjoyed these many years; for your support, encouragement, and fun times at the conventions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ruth".

Ruth Rumsey

AVSA's officers and I all wish Ruth well and a happy retirement. We are grateful for her many years of outstanding work and service to the society. Your Executive Committee will announce a plan for the transition and for the hiring of a new editor in the very near future. Thank you Ruth for all you have done for us!!

Richard Nicholas
President

Coming Event

November 4 & 5, 2017

New Jersey

TriState African Violet Council
Annual Judged Show & Plant Sale
Frelinghuysen Arboretum
53 East Hanover Avenue

Morristown, New Jersey

Saturday, November 4, 2017 - 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm

Sunday, November 5, 2017 - 10:30 am - 2:00 pm

Info: Janet Sierzega Show Chair

email: jsierzega@gmail.com

Office Update

By Amy Carruth, AVSA Office Manager

2375 North Street • Beaumont, TX 77702

Email: avsa@earthlink.net

I hope everyone enjoyed their summer! We are excited for fall to come to Southeast Texas. Many people have called or emailed asking about the building since Hurricane Harvey. We only received minor roof damage here at the office. My home was damaged and as a result I have had to be out of the office more than I would like to. I am processing membership and orders as quickly as I can. Thank you for your understanding and patience during such a crazy time!

The 72nd AVSA convention and show will be held May 20 - 27, 2018 in Buffalo, NY at the Adam's Mark Buffalo Hotel and Event Centre. This will be a joint convention with the AVSC. Registration information should be published on the website after the first of the year. If you do not have access to a computer, please call the office and I will mail you a packet. I am looking forward to seeing all of you there!

The 2018 AVSA Calendar is available for purchase from our website store. The cost is \$15.00 (shipping included). These make great gifts for the holidays!

To login to the members section of the website:

The username: member

The password: the last word of the President's column in each issue.



Please email the office avsa@earthlink.net or call (844)-400-2872 if you have any questions.

AVSA Convention Awards:

Please send all your donations to the AVSA office, AVSA, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702. Send all your suggestions to Debbie McInnis, 3620 Eagles Trace, Floyds Knob, IN 47119 or to dkmcinnis@twc.com. You can also get a form on our website <http://avsa.org/conventions-2018>.

Donations: If you or your club would like to make a donation to the Booster Fund, Building Fund, BERF, or the Tinari Fund, please mail your donations to the office, AVSA, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702 instead of the listed Chair. Please make note for which fund and any special requests.

Attention Affiliates: Please make sure that your club's information is up to date with the AVSA office and with our affiliate chair, Mel Grice. You can email any changes to avsa@earthlink.net and to melsgrice@earthlink.net. The affiliate liability insurance renewals will be mailed out later this month and it is very important we have the correct information. **If your President does not receive a notice by the end of November, please contact the office as soon as possible.**

Happy Growing!

amy



2017 AVSA Orlando Show Awards

“Florida: Gateway to the Tropics”

June 1-3, 2017 • Orlando, Florida

Best African Violet in Show

Rob's Boolaroo

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

2nd Best African Violet in Show

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

3rd Best African Violet in Show

N-Avatar

Won by: Dmitry Ozherelyev

Best AVSA Standard Collection

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

Cajun's Coujon

Buckeye Tea Party

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

2nd Best AVSA Standard Collection

Cajun's Zydeco

Cajun's Freckleface Kid

Cajun's Beautiful Oblivion

Won by: Belinda Thibodeaux

Best AVSA Mini/Semimini Collection

Jolly Orchid

Little Blue Bandit

Persian Prince

Won by: Julie Jones

2nd Best AVSA Mini/Semimini Collection

Optimara Little Blackfoot

Jazz Bouquet

Rob's Suicidal Squirrel

Won by: Debbie McInnis

Best Holtkamp Collection

Optimara Little Pearl

Optimara Little Ruby

Optimara Little Rhodonite

Won by: Kathy Lahti

Best Buckeye Collection

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

Buckeye Choral Bells

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Khomiachok

PT-Iunaia Pastushka

LE-Prekrasnaia Kreolka

Won by: Debbie McInnis

Best Cajun's Collection

Cajun's Flamboyant Mistress

Cajun's Coujon

Cajun's Drama Queen

Won by: Debbie McInnis

Best Standard African Violet

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

Best Miniature African Violet

Jolly LuLu

Won by: Anne Nicholas

Best Semiminiature African Violet

N-Avatar

Won by: Dmitry Ozherelyev

Best Trailer

Rob's Boolaroo

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

Best Species African Violet

S. 8 clone Cha Simba

Won by: Carolee Carter

Best New Cultivar - Amateur

Cajun's Storm Dancer

Won by: Belinda Thibodeaux

Best Vintage Violet

Peach Brandy

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

Best Other Gesneriad

Primulina bipinnatifida

Won by: Elmer Godeny

2nd Best Other Gesneriad

Primulina dryas 'Hisako'

Won by: Robert McMeel

Best 'Lonestar Helen Mahr'

Won by: Debbie McInnis

Best 'Jersey Snowflakes'

Won by: Debbie McInnis

Best 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler'

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

Best 'Buckeye Tea Party'

Buckeye Tea Party

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

Best 'The Alps'

The Alps

Won by: Angela Newell

Best 'Irish Flirt'

Irish Flirt

Won by: Catherine Carter

Best Variegated African Violet

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

Won by: Kurt Jablonski

Best Primulina

Primulina bipinnatifida

Won by: Elmer Godeny

Best Design in Show

"Miami's Parrot Jungle"

Won by: Susan Anderson

2nd Best Design in Show

"Natural Garden"

Won by: Mary Lou Harden

3rd Best Design in Show

"Dish Garden"

Won by: Mary Lou Harden

Best Interpretive Plant Arrangement

"Fun in the Tropical Sun"

Won by: Mel Grice

Best Interpretive Flower Arrangement

"Miami's Parrot Jungle"

Won by: Susan Anderson

Best Container Garden

"Natural Garden"

Won by: Mary Lou Harden

Best Underwater Design

"Sea Snorkeling"

Won by: Linda Hall

Best African Violet in Show - Commercial
Annabelle

Won by: Donna Brining

2nd Best African Violet in Show - Commercial
S. rupicola

Won by: JoS Violets



In Search of New Violets

Dr. Jeff Smith, *The Indiana Academy*

Ball State University • Muncie, IN 47306

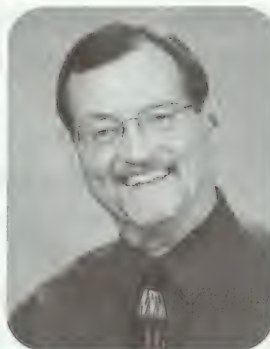
Email: JSmith4@bsu.edu

The column in this issue is going to look a bit different. Sometimes when I am contacted by a hybridizer about an unusual outcome from a cross, a series of questions go back and forth between the two of us. I thought it might be interesting to share part of the dialog between Stephen Covolo on the seedling shown below. This seedling was from a cross of 'Harbor Blue' X 'Frozen In Time'. 'Harbor Blue' is a 1986 registered hybrid from T. Weber. It has a single light blue pansy flower. 'Frozen In Time' is a 2003 registered hybrid from Lyndon Lyon Greenhouses/Sorano. It has single to semi-double white pansy flowers that have a variable edging of green and lavender. 'Frozen In Time' also has variegated foliage.



Covolo. Harbor Blue X Frozen in Time.

Stephen reported that most of the seedlings were white; white with green edges, white with green and blue/purple edges, or solid blues. Petal count in the seedlings ranged from singles to semi-doubles to full doubles. He had shelf space at the time, so



grew out every seedling, a total of 40.

(Note - The sample size is always important in analyzing genetic data making it easier to spot patterns and trends and I do appreciate working with data.)

Stephen: *Is the outcome of this cross consistent with what would be expected?*

Jeff: It looks you are getting two basic types of colors in the flowers, blue and white. You haven't mentioned ratios but I would suspect you are getting a 1:1 ratio, which is consistent with one plant being homozygous recessive and the other heterozygous. It looks like the edging pattern (green or blue or both) is showing up only on the white flowers and is possibly linked to that color. From my experience with 'Frozen In Time,' I suspect that the color of the edging is temperature dependent with more blue coloration showing when grown cooler. I'm a little surprised at the full doubles since the parent with the highest petal count is only a semi-double, but I've seen this happen before. So yes, these results are consistent with what I would have expected from the cross.

Stephen: *So where did the reverse fantasy pattern come from in this one seedling, and why is the pattern restricted to only the petal edges?*

Jeff: Now that is very interesting. When only one seedling shows a trait different from all the others like this in a cross my mind automatically screams "sport" or "mutation". It's possible that both parents carry reverse fantasy as a recessive trait, but if that were true I would have expected more seedlings with the trait. Your large sample size would seem to favor mutation as the more likely explanation.

The restriction of the white areas to the petal edges is very unusual and would seem to be linked somehow to the edges from 'Frozen In Time'. The question would be how this linkage is occurring and why is the expression only on the petal edges.

I've noticed that the green edges of the flowers of 'Frozen In Time' are often flecked with white. This reminds me of the variegation pattern seen in the leaves. What if the white areas in the flower edging are actually an expression of leaf variegation? Flowers are modified leaves and we know that green flowering African violets have the same pigments and stomata structures of the leaves. Perhaps the edging of 'Frozen In Time' is really an expression of a leaf characteristic such as variegation. That might explain why the white marks are found only on the edges of your seedling. They are in the same location as the edging pattern from 'Frozen In Time.'

Jeff: Have you noticed if the amount of white is temperature dependent? Reverse fantasy is normally stable in expression at different temperatures. Leaf variegation often changes expression with temperature. This might help explain if your seedling has the reverse fantasy or some type of strange leaf variegation on the petal edges.

Stephen: *Actually I have grown this plant on different shelves, both cool lower shelves and warmer upper shelves. The amount of white in the edging does change. There is less white in the flowers on the plant when grown cool and more white in the edging of the flowers when the plant is grown warmer.*

Jeff: Based on the response to temperature, I would propose that the white edges on your seedling are not reverse fantasy (which didn't fit the inheritance pattern regardless) but is instead some sort of manifestation of variegated foliage on the petal edges. The pattern is obviously coming from 'Frozen In Time' and is apparently linked to the green flower edges of that parent. However, your seedling seems to be more "flower-like" than "leaf-like" with the blue/purple flower color extending all the way to the edges. Sort of a combination of the color from 'Harbor Blue' with the

green edge pattern from 'Frozen In Time' combined in the same plant. An unusual combination of traits from both parents perhaps expressed together due to a new mutation.

Stephen: *Would it be possible to get this white edge pattern in other flowers such as red? If so, what would you advise for the cross?*

Jeff: Since blue/purple is dominant to all other colors, I would try using your seedling as the seed parent and cross it with a red-flowered pollen parent. The F1 generation will likely only show blue flowers. However, if any of them show your new edge pattern, try a backcross to the red-flowered pollen parent. This should give you a 50% chance of red-flowered offspring. Hopefully, the new edge pattern will inherit as a dominant and give you some seedlings with red flowers and white edges about 25% of the time. If the F1 does not produce any seedlings with the new edge pattern, try crossing two F1 seedlings together. This should reinforce the inheritance of the edge pattern as well as give you a 25% chance for red flowers. If both the edge pattern and red flower color are recessives, the probability would be about .25 X .25 or about 6% for the combination of red flowers and your white edges.

If you wanted to work with other flower colors such as pink or coral, follow the same hybridization pattern that was described for red flowers. However, I think the contrast between the white and a darker color such as red would produce a more striking pattern in the flowers.

Final Note – thanks to Stephen Covolo for giving permission to share his picture and conversation. This trait is new in my experience and could perhaps become a new and interesting flower pattern trait for future hybridizing programs. If anyone else out there has observed a similar outcome from 'Frozen In Time' we'd love to hear about your experience.



AVSA Convention - Buffalo, New York 2018 Award Donations for AVSA and AVSC Joint Convention and Show

By Debbie McInnis - AVSA Convention Show Awards Chair

Plans are already being made for the 72nd AVSA Convention and Show which will be held May 20 - May 27, 2018, at the Adam's Mark Buffalo Hotel in Buffalo, NY. We all hope to see you there. This year's show will no doubt double our pleasure. The Convention will be a joint endeavor with our Canadian friends the African Violet Society of Canada.

Our hosts will be the New York State African Violet Society.

Donations are currently being sent in to award our growers for all their hard work and preparations to bring their violets to this 2018 show. We

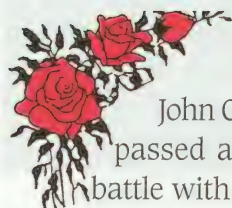
would like to **invite you and your affiliate club members to donate to the awards fund.** This is an opportunity to be a part of this very important convention effort. If you go to our website avsa.org under **Conventions**, you can see what awards have already been donated for the 2018 Buffalo Convention. You can make your

donation for a specific variety, or leave your award donation undesignated and it will be applied where needed. Please **send** your award donation by check (payable to AVSA) to the **AVSA Office, 2375 North Street, Beaumont, TX 77702.** We appreciate **all** awards donated by societies and individuals that support our convention show. Please, if you have any questions you may contact me at dkmcinnis@twc.com.

Come join us to see our African violet Show consisting of many different varieties and colors. There will be an AVSA-AVSC Commercial

Vendor Salesroom, with vendors from different parts of the US and Canada. During the week, presentations, covering all aspects of growing and showing African violets, will be held. Make your plans now to be there.

This page will help to keep you informed, and up-to-date, on convention-related activities as the information becomes available.



In Memory of John T. Carter

John Carter, AVSA President 2013-2015, passed away August 25 after a second battle with cancer. John has been described as a quiet Christian man. He was a true man of faith and a quiet but strong leader. He has been described as man of service, and truly he was. John gave unselfishly of his time and effort to his church, to the Rose Society, to the Tulsa AVS, and certainly to AVSA. For John Carter, no task

was too large or too small. He was always willing to lead calmly or to work behind the scenes. With support from Judy, his wife of 43 years, he gave much to our society. Whether John was initiating a newsletter, or quietly working the computer for the show awards committee, he always listened to everyone, and cared deeply for AVSA. Most of all, he was a friend to all. He will truly be missed.

Registration Report

By Joe Bruns

1220 Stratford Lane • Hanover Park, IL 60133

Email: jbruns@qwip.net

Dmitry Ozherelyev – Moscow, Russia

'Irish Flirt Mini' (10897) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/Tsentr Mini) Double green and white frilled star. Medium green, plain, glossy, serrated. **Miniature**

'PT-Katarina' (10898) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/T. Pugacheva) Double wine-red ruffled large/white edge. Medium green, quilted, ovate, wavy. **Standard**

'PT-Shakh-Shakhriar' (10899) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/T. Pugacheva) Semidouble lavender pansy/purple eye and veins, green-bronze ruffled edge. Dark green, quilted, glossy ruffled/red back. **Standard**

'PT-Sharliz' (10900) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/T. Pugacheva) Double pink two-tone ruffled large star/occasional lavender fantasy, lavender sparkle band, variable bronze edge. Dark green, glossy, wavy/red back. **Standard**

'PT-Tanets Trostnika' (10901) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/T. Pugacheva) Single-semidouble light pink star/darker pink and green ruffled edge. Dark green, quilted, glossy, wavy, serrated/red back. **Standard**

'PT-Tsvectushchaia Sakura' (10902) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/T. Pugacheva) Semidouble-double light pink star/random dark pink ruffled edge. Dark green, quilted, glossy/red back. **Standard**

'RM-Rozovye Kudri' (10903) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/N. Skorniakova) Single pink sticktite star/ivory eye, light green edge, petals curved backward. Medium green, quilted, ruffled. **Standard**

'RM-Sokrovishcha Korolei' (10904) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/N. Skorniakova) Double pink large star/blue fantasy, fuchsia edge. Medium green, quilted, glossy, scalloped. **Standard**

'RM-Vasilisa' (10905) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/N. Skorniakova) Semidouble-double white to light blue ruffled large pansy/darker veins and edge. Dark green, glossy, ruffled/red back. **Standard**

'RM-Vizantiiskaia Roza' (10906) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/N. Skorniakova) Single-semidouble dark fuchsia ruffled large star/occasional purple fantasy. Dark green, glossy, wavy/red back. **Standard**



'RM-Vizavi' (10907) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/N. Skorniakova) Single wine-red sticktite wavy large star/thin white edge. Dark green, glossy, wavy/red back. **Large**

'Sassy Sister Mini' (10908) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/Tsentr Mini) Double pink two-tone pansy/green ruffled edge. Medium green, plain, glossy, serrated. **Miniature**

'Zagadka Klementiny' (10909) 06/07/2017 (D. Ozherelyev/L. Galitskaya) Single light blue sticktite ruffled star. **Chimera variegated** dark to silver green and white, pointed. **Standard**

Kathy Hajner – Peralta, NM

'K's Berry Bianco' (10910) 07/08/2017 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble purple and white frilled large pansy/blue overlay. Medium green, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

'K's Glacier Falls' (10911) 07/08/2017 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble white frilled large pansy. Light-medium green, quilted. **Standard**

'K's Sangria Splash' (10912) 07/08/2017 (K. Hajner) Single-semidouble fuchsia frilled large pansy/blue fantasy, lighter edge. Medium green, quilted, serrated. **Standard**

Linda Abplanalp – Burlington, NC

'Carolina Elegant Affair' (10913) 07/31/2017 (L. Abplanalp) Single-semidouble white ruffled star/pink patches. **Variegated** medium green and white, quilted, wavy. **Standard**

REGISTRATION CHANGE

The following has been changed by the Plant Registration Committee:

'Shirl's Snow Cone' (9488) Change blossom description to "*variable* pink blush" (change in italics).

NAME RESERVATIONS

Donna McCormick

* Sandman *





Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Buckeye Exotic Dancer

Exhibited by: Linda Lloyd

Hybridized by: Pat Hancock

Standard



Photo Credit: Mel Grice

Buckeye Concord Grape

Exhibited by: Debbie McInnis

Hybridized by: Pat Hancock

Standard

Paying It Forward

By Pat Hancock

From the *Violet Connection*, newsletter of Ohio State AVS • Mel Grice, Editor

I thoroughly enjoyed reading Barb Werness' article in the July/August issue, about all the people who had mentored her. I called to tell her and we chatted about the "violet people" who had been in our lives.

This morning, Ruthie called me and said a lady had called the AVSA office, and asked how she could find my article about "the Triangles."

That started me thinking from where and from whom I first heard about the "Rule of 3", the triangles.

Like everyone, my grandmother grew "Grocery store African violets." When I was in my teens, she showed me how to root a leaf in water. She grew many different flowers, but for some reason, the African violets were the only ones that caught my interest.

About 1949, I visited my husband's Aunt Mae, and for the first time saw beautiful cultivars from a lady in Indiana, Betty Stoelr. Aunt Mae had a plant stand and lights. She told me how she wicked her violets with yarn. She took me to visit Betty Stoelr, and I saw for the first time, large "show" violets. She was very helpful with information, and I went back to my home, determined to grow "that kind of violets."

I became a collector, and wanted every new color and type.

About 1952, I saw an ad for African violet leaves in a generic flower magazine, placed by a lady in Cincinnati by the name of Pricilla Landaker.

I called, and then went to her house to see more beautiful show plants. I bought leaves, and we became best friends. She shared all of her knowledge – and took me to Granger Gardens to buy more plants.

We played Bridge together, and had a wonderful

friendship for as long as she lived.

She taught me a great deal about soils, propagation, the known diseases, and their cures.

In 1992, I met two of my important mentors; Marie Burns and Ann Thomas. Everyone knows about Marie's growing success, and Ann Thomas was also a great grower.

Marie is probably where I first heard about the "Rule of Three," but I am really not sure.

Ann told me about wicks made from women's hose, and they are still my favorite wicks today.

About 1993, I met David Heath when I joined the Cincinnati AV Society. David grew gorgeous plants and did a little hybridizing. We spent many hours talking plants and sharing ideas. David gave me my first seedpod.

The point of all this history is that most of us are the product of growers who came before us, who were willing to share information and mentor us. Those who were willing to share information and mentor us.

Over the years, I have shown a few African violets, and have won a few prizes, but the winning was a very temporary feeling of achievement. My Greatest joy has been when someone I have helped a bit has succeeded in growing beautiful plants.

Hobbies do not seem to have the importance today that they once had. People just seem to be too busy.

It is my hope that more new people will continue to love and grow African violets; and that our clubs will continue to be here to teach members how to grow.

It is as equally important for each one of us to mentor new growers whenever we can. Our hobby will die if we fail to "pay it forward."





Photo Credit: Mel Grice

Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler

Exhibited by: Linda Lloyd

Hybridized by: Pat Hancock

Standard

Saintpaulia, the NEW *Streptocarpus*

Winston Goretsky • Calgary, Alberta, Canada • <Winston@Goretsky.ca>

Over the years, botanists have discovered new and fascinating plants throughout the world and have tried to classify them according to accepted rules available at the time of discovery. Evolving over time, new research techniques or classification ideas have become available that expand earlier research, or at least causes rethinking about relationships. Current methodology allows DNA analysis to form more accurate comparisons of related organisms to provide a clearer picture of similarity or diversity. This research has resulted in a reclassification of many existing species, in particular for us the genus *Saintpaulia* appears to be more appropriately placed as a **section** within subgenus *Streptocarpella* of the genus *Streptocarpus* instead of being a separate genus.

How will we now correctly cite this new reclassification?

- genus *Streptocarpus* subgenus *Streptocarpella* sect. *Saintpaulia*
- genus *Streptocarpus* sect. *Saintpaulia*



S. 5c2. cl. *diplotrichus* Parker



S. 5b. cl. *confusa* Uppsala 2004-0790

Both are correct. The one including subgenus *Streptocarpella* just gives additional information, but *Streptocarpus* sect. *Saintpaulia* is unique and can be confused with nothing else.

Latin nouns (*Streptocarpus*) have grammatical gender, often indicated by their ending. Since the grammatical gender of *Saintpaulia* is feminine and *Streptocarpus* is masculine, in several instances the spellings of species' names have been updated for gender agreement with *Streptocarpus*.

Dr. Jeffrey Smith has provided a reference table that can be used to correlate the former classification of *Saintpaulia* to the new classification with the updated spellings.

It is highly recommended for anyone growing Saintpaulias that the original name be preserved in order to maintain the diversity and stability of this group. In the future there may be another reclassification that recognizes the diversity of Saintpaulias, and by preserving the distinctiveness today, we protect the future diversity of this group. (It also helps us in not having to rename everything we are currently growing.)

For more information on this subject, please read Dr. Smith's article on the Gesneriad Reference Web <http://www.gesneriads.info/articles/saintpaulia/saintpaulia/>.

Accessions of *Saintpaulia* Known to be Available in North America

Column 1 follows the numbering system and species identification of Darbyshire (2006) as modified by the African Violet Society of America (*S. brevipilosa*, *S. nitida*, and *S. rupicola* were kept as

species rather than subspecies). List by J. Smith as of July 18, 2008 and modified on December 28, 2016 and October 4, 2017 to include subspecies changes suggested by Nishii et. al., 2015 and the addition of species *S. ulugurensis* and *S. watkinsii*.



S. 5h. cl. *rupicolus* Cha Simba or Chasimba

Column 2 is the proposed AVSA abbreviations and names

AVSA Abbreviated Names

S. 1. inconspicua

S. 2. pusilla

S. 3. shumensis

S. 3. cl. shumensis

S. 3. cl. shumensis Mather EE

S. 4. teitensis

S. 5 ionantha

5a. subspecies *grandifolia*

S. 5a. cl. grandifolia No. 237

S. 5a. cl. grandifolia No. 299

5b. subspecies *grotei*

S. 5b. cl. confusa

S. 5b. cl. confusa Mather Brother Paddy

S. 5b. cl. confusa Mather E

S. 5b. cl. confusa Uppsala 3395

S. 5b. cl. difficilis

S. 5b. cl. difficilis Mather No. 2

S. 5b. cl. difficilis Uppsala 3396

S. 5b. cl. grotei

S. 5b. cl. grotei Amazon

S. 5b. cl. grotei Cornell G149

S. 5b. cl. grotei Mather No. 7

S. 5b. cl. grotei Mather No. 21

S. 5b. cl. grotei Mather V

S. 5b. cl. grotei Protzen or Uppsala 3091

S. 5b. cl. grotei Silvert

S. 5b. cl. grotei sport

S. 5b. cl. magungensis

S. 5b. cl. magungensis var. *minima*

5c. subspecies *ionantha*

1. variety *ionantha*

following the Nishii et. al., 2015 merger of Saintpaulia as a section in genus *Streptocarpus*. *S. rupicola* was inserted as a subspecies under *ionanthus* moving subspecies *velutinus* from position H to position I. Some names have been corrected for Latin gender agreement with genus name *Streptocarpus*.

Nishii et. al. , 2015

S. 1. inconspicuus (not in cultivation)

S. 2. afroviola (not in cultivation)

S. 3. shumensis

S. 3. cl. shumensis

S. 3. cl. shumensis Mather EE

S. 4. teitensis

S. 5. ionanthus

5a. subspecies *grandifolius*

S. 5a. cl. grandifolius No. 237

S. 5a. cl. grandifolius No. 299

5b. subspecies *grotei*

S. 5b. cl. confusa

S. 5b. cl. confusa Mather Brother Paddy

S. 5b. cl. confusa Mather E

S. 5b. cl. confusa Uppsala 3395

S. 5b. cl. difficilis

S. 5b. cl. difficilis Mather No. 2

S. 5b. cl. difficilis Uppsala 3396

S. 5b. cl. grotei

S. 5b. cl. grotei Amazon

S. 5b. cl. grotei Cornell G149

S. 5b. cl. grotei Mather No. 7

S. 5b. cl. grotei Mather No. 21

S. 5b. cl. grotei Mather V

S. 5b. cl. grotei Protzen or Uppsala 3091

S. 5b. cl. grotei Silvert

S. 5b. cl. grotei sport

S. 5b. cl. magungensis

S. 5b. cl. magungensis var. *minima*

5c. subspecies *ionanthus*

1. variety *ionanthus*

- S.* 5c1. cl. *ionantha* House of Amani
S. 5c1. cl. *ionantha*
S. 5c1. cl. *ionantha* Amazon
S. 5c1. cl. *ionantha* 930919
S. 5c1. cl. Pangani Falls
S. 5c1. cl. Sigi Falls
S. 5c1. cl. *tongwensis*
S. 5c1. cl. *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397
S. 5c1. cl. white *ionantha* or
Mather No. 20
2. variety *diplotricha*
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotricha* Parker
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotricha* Punter No. 0
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotricha* Punter No. 6
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotricha* Punter No. 7
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotricha* Uppsala 3084
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotricha* Uppsala 3085
5d. subspecies *maifiensis*
5e. subspecies *occidentalis*
S. 5e. cl. *magungensis* var. *occidentalis*
S. 5e. cl. *magungensis* var. *occidentalis*
Mather No. 12
5f. subspecies *orbicularis*
S. 5f. cl. *orbicularis*
S. 5f. cl. *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*
5g. subspecies *pendula*
S. 5g. cl. *intermedia*
S. 5g. cl. *pendula*
S. 5g. cl. *pendula* Cornell G304
S. 5g. cl. *pendula* Uppsala 3087
S. 5g. cl. *pendula* Uppsala 3089
S. 5g. cl. *pendula* Uppsala 3090
S. 5g. cl. *pendula* var. *kizarae*
5h. subspecies *rupicola*
S. 5h. cl. *rupicola*
S. 5h. cl. Mather No. 5
S. 5h. cl. pale or lite
S. 5h. cl. Cha Simba or
Chasimba
S. 5h. cl. Kacharoroni or
Robertson
5i. subspecies *velutina*
S. 5i. cl. *velutina*
S. 5i. cl. *velutina* Amazon
S. 5i. cl. *velutina* lite
S. 6. *brevipilosa*
S. 6. cl. *brevipilosus*

- S.* 5c1. cl. *ionanthus* House of Amani
S. 5c1. cl. *ionanthus*
S. 5c1. cl. *ionanthus* Amazon
S. 5c1. cl. *ionanthus* 930919
S. 5c1. cl. Pangani Falls
S. 5c1. cl. Sigi Falls
S. 5c1. cl. *tongwensis*
S. 5c1. cl. *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397
S. 5c1. cl. white *ionanthus* or
Mather No. 20
2. variety *diplotrichus*
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotrichus* Parker
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotrichus* Punter No. 0
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotrichus* Punter No. 6
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotrichus* Punter No. 7
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotrichus* Uppsala 3084
S. 5c2. cl. *diplotrichus* Uppsala 3085
5d. subspecies *maifiensis* (not in cultivation)
5e. subspecies *occidentalis*
S. 5e. cl. *magungensis* var. *occidentalis*
S. 5e. cl. *magungensis* var. *occidentalis*
Mather No. 12
5f. subspecies *orbicularis*
S. 5f. cl. *orbicularis*
S. 5f. cl. *orbicularis* var. *purpurea*
5g. subspecies *pendulus*
S. 5g. cl. *intermedia*
S. 5g. cl. *pendulus*
S. 5g. cl. *pendulus* Cornell G304
S. 5g. cl. *pendulus* Uppsala 3087
S. 5g. cl. *pendulus* Uppsala 3089
S. 5g. cl. *pendulus* Uppsala 3090
S. 5g. cl. *pendulus* var. *kizarae*
5h. subspecies *rupicolus*
S. 5h. cl. *rupicolus*
S. 5h. cl. *rupicolus* Mather No. 5
S. 5h. cl. *rupicolus* pale or lite
S. 5h. cl. *rupicolus* Cha Simba or
Chasimba
S. 5h. cl. *rupicolus* Kacharoroni or
Robertson
5i. subspecies *velutinus*
S. 5i. cl. *velutinus*
S. 5i. cl. *velutinus* Amazon
S. 5i. cl. *velutinus* lite
S. 6. *brevipilosus*
S. 6. cl. *brevipilosus*

S. 6. cl. Mather No. 10

S. 6. cl. Grusell or

Nguru Mnt

S. 7. nitida

S. 8. ulugurensis

S. 9. goetzeana

S. 10. watkinsii

S. 6. cl. brevipilosus Mather No. 10

S. 6. cl. brevipilosus Grusell or

Nguru Mnt. or Uppsala 3154

S. 7. nitidus

S. 8. ulugurensis (not in cultivation)

S. 9. goetzeanus

S. 10. watkinsii (not in cultivation)



S. 5i. cl. *velutinus*

Note: The use of italics for the "S" in the former AVSA system represents a *Saintpaulia* species. Under the Nishii et. al. system, the "S" does not need to be in italics.



S. 5cl. cl. *ionanthus*



S. 5cl. cl. *tongwensis* Uppsala 3397

Labeling Suggestion: The purpose of using abbreviated names (the number codes estab-

lished by AVSA) is to shorten the required scientific names that need to be used. For example, you can more easily write on your label *S. 5c2. cl. diplotrichus* Parker than *Saintpaulia ionanthus*, subspecies *ionanthus*, var. *diplotrichus*, clone Parker. (The 5c2. code indicates that it is the species *ionanthus*, subspecies *ionanthus*, var. *diplotrichus* so all that information does not need to be written out.)

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Making the Green While Talking Dirt in the Workplace

By Christopher Paiva • cjpsychrn@comcast.net

As a psychiatric RN working in a busy acute care adult unit, I find myself preaching to my patients on topics such as ways to alleviate anxiety and depression in their lives, but never practice my own advice. Sound familiar? I often teach patients to take on a hobby that will help overcome some of the stressors that they are enduring. With a reduction in anxiety and depression, patients feel more in control of their lives and can make sound decisions pertaining to their future. Hobbies ignite creativity and open the mind to new possibilities, which has positive health benefits. Some examples of hobbies we teach are exercise, yoga, meditation, music, crafting, painting and journaling.

Approximately three years ago, I decided to take my own advice and started to come up with different hobbies of my own, but none seemed to keep my interest for any length of time. I purchased my first African violet, a NOID with beautiful coloration. Alas, I found my new hobby! Almost instantly, I found the relaxation that I greatly needed in my life. I pampered my plant and then with some experience, one plant turned into five plants, then ten more and so on...you get the picture! I joined both the AVSA and my local AV Society and learned from the experts, and from the members. An Internet search led me to vast sources of information pertaining to African violets. I was getting serious, obsessed, and addicted!

With so many varieties in my collection, I began to propagate them from leaves, which produced so many new plantlets, that I didn't know what to do with, and was quickly running out of space in my plant room. As a newcomer to this hobby, I just could not discard one single leaf, so I propagated even more plants...boy, have I changed my thinking now!

One day at my workplace, I spoke to a colleague RN who loved to garden and spoke of my African

violets and the successes and enjoyment I was having growing these plants. She seemed intrigued and very interested in growing one of her own. That's when the idea hit me! The very next day, I brought twenty of my plantlets to work with a sign that said, "Free For The Taking...Happy Growing!" I also left a few copies of instructions on how to properly care for the plants. At the end of my shift, all were happily adopted. Many took them home while other staff grew them under lights in offices throughout the hospital.

Weekly, I continued bringing more and more of the plants that were started from my leaves until there were none to spare. Each and every time, all plants were eagerly taken by staff. The plants were happily acquired by nurses, mental health technicians, social workers, psychiatrists, and other ancillary staff within the hospital.

Now and again, someone would stop me in the corridors and say, "I got one of your plants and its doing great!" Some of the coworkers had negative outcomes with their plants, "It died on me" or "I knew I would kill it!". Another nurse, with tears in her eyes came to me and shamefully uttered, "My husband brought it outside for more sunlight because it was growing so well and cooked her in the sun". "No worries, I have more at home", I would reply. Others had some comical fatalities when one worker drove off from work with the plant still on the roof of her car only finding a gelatinous green mush on the road when she pulled the car around in an attempt to retrieve it. Sadly, as she scooped plant remains, she realized it could not be revived and added this plant to her long list of fatalities with trying to grow houseplants. Another coworker was horrified when she returned from work one day to find her once thriving African violet clenched in her cat's jaws as the nasty feline was clawing the poor plant to shreds on the scatter rug in her living room!

(Never been a fan of cats....I'm just saying!). There was a staff member who returned a plant in a small plastic box stating, "I think the plant is dying... will you take a look?" As I lifted the box lid, I examined a brown matted clump sitting on top of the box and quickly shut the lid like a coffin, replying, "I pronounce it dead". She told me she watered the plant with ice cubes. "Well my orchids love ice and they thrive on it!" She handed me back the coffin like box and that was the end of the conversation and the plant for that matter.

Many asked questions on growing techniques while others discussed concerns about their AV's general care while others proudly took "selfies" of their plants on their cellphones to show me as if they were showing me their first born infant! One social worker grabbed me by my arm one day and dragged me to her office. She showed me her plant and excitedly said, "It's blooming and it's so beautiful...I love it...I could never grow anything before!"

After several months, many of the staff who were successfully growing the plants, had concerns about repotting. Since I use a soil-less mix, it was difficult for many of them to comprehend the growing medium that was optimal for successful AV growing. "You mean that they can grow in no dirt....I never heard that!" For several weeks I made my soil-less mix recipe and poured them into sealed sandwich baggies and again left signs "Free...Time

to Repot in This Mix" with instructions about proper pot size and wicking.

I now continue to bring in plants to the workplace and began to offer some of my well established African violets as gifts when I see an employee who goes above and beyond their job description to assist another staff person or patient. It is my way of saying I that I recognized them for a job well done and being extraordinary examples to others and to the institution we are employed. It certainly has cleared out space in plant room and I try to resist purchasing more plants but is difficult to pass up a new variety that demonstrates show quality.

What I have learned from this great experience is that once you discover a passion in life, share your enthusiasm with others. I can attest that the African violet has brought much comradery and happiness among my co-worker growers and has given me joy to share my hobby with others. Use your passion to get others interested in African violet growing and hopefully this will inspire them to get involved at local AV clubs and even on the national level. We all need to play a role when we join an organization and building new members gives longevity to the establishment as well as bringing fresh new ideas and inspirations. It's hard not to be inspired by people who are passionate about what they're doing. African violet enthusiasts are those kinds of people!





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*Aeschynanthus
x splendidus*

Exhibited by:
Paul Sorano



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*Rob's Slap
Happy*

Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by:
Ralph Robinson
Semiminiature

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Heinz's Good Vibrations

Exhibited by:
Carolee Carter
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Standard



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



Rob's Kitten Caboodle

Exhibited by:
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Semiminiature

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The Violet Network

By Jennie Lawrence

Email: missjennae@yahoo.com

Media has changed the way we interact with the world. We have a wealth of information and friendships at our fingertips. One of the most popular social media platforms is Twitter. In 140 characters or less, you can let the world know what you are thinking or doing. Many of the posts on Twitter are simply links to web pages. This was the case when I entered African violets in the search field.

One of the first posts that came up was an author's post, by Elise M. Stone. The post read, "Lilliana Wentworth has two hobbies. One is raising African violets. The other is solving murders." Being an avid reader, I clicked on the link. This led me to Amazon. I found that Ms. Stone has written a four book murder- mystery series. Her books are free to read if you have Kindle Unlimited. I downloaded the first one, and look forward to reading it.

Another post was an advertisement for the Halifax African Violet Society Plant Sale, to be held in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Numerous posts by individuals come up when you search for African violets. One such post was from a gentleman named Scott Evans, who was promoting National Plant Week. The post read, "There are 9 [sic] species and numerous clones of African violets, and over 18,000 named cultivars." The hashtag that followed was NebExt.

April Field Designs posted a photo of a ring, artfully placed on the blooms of an African violet. This company was advertising handmade jewelry, and an upcoming event where customers could purchase the jewelry.

Many companies take advantage of Twitter to provide links to their home pages. Garden Pics and Tips shared a link to "Top 10 Tips for Success with African Violets." This was a very informative website covering a wide variety of plant related topics. These included Flowers and Gardens, Vegetables, Water Gardens, and Garden Quotes. The latter was a fun read.

Espoma's link suggested one "Plant African



Violets for a Pop of Color." Another post by the same company read, "Learn how to Pick, Plant, and Care for Them." Green Valley Supply had a link to a page on growing African violets from cuttings. This is a very small company selling gardening tools and supplies.

VanWingerden appears to be a large, commercial greenhouse. They had many photos and videos posted, of numerous different, beautiful plants. I clicked on their name, and many of their earlier Twitter posts came up. It was easy to spend some time scrolling through these posts. Their photos are well done.

Jade Rose Crochet and others had links to their Etsy pages. The former designs patterns for crocheted flower earrings. Other Etsy page links included paintings and other artwork featuring African violets.

There are also links to Youtube videos. One such link demonstrated dividing and repotting African violets.

People can pay to promote their Twitter posts, which means strange things pop up in the middle of a search. These included a photo of a beef steak, with the caveat of, "Read This Before You Order..." Another was for a Playskool Play Favorites Busy Poppin' Pals toy.

As with anything, the reader/searcher should be wary of some of the information presented on Twitter. Remember, anyone can post anything, and some of it is incorrect. Nevertheless, this is a good site to view beautiful photos of African violets and other plants and flowers. It is also great for getting ideas on displaying your violets and more.

To view Twitter posts, go to twitter.com. Click on Sign Up Now, and fill in the user information to create an account.

On another note – I have been asked about the possibility of starting an AVSA affiliated club in Wyoming. If any readers are from Wyoming or Eastern Nebraska, and would be interested in participating in a club, please contact me.

AVSA – Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner, Chairman • 12916 Midfield Terrace • St. Louis MO 63146

August 1, 2017 - September 30, 2017



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Mary Chelton
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Suet Lai Yeung Rosettak



Two-Tone - \$25-\$49

Spring Branch AVC - TX

Memphis AVS -TN

*In memory of Audrey Mozelle Navarre,
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Neville W. Ward, Great Falls, VA
Sherin Boyd, Saint John, NB E2M 1R9, Canada
Sharon Cunney, Mount Jackson, VA
Mary K. Chelton, Patchogue, NY
Mary Lou Beyer, Howell, NJ

2018 AVSA/AVSC Convention Show Awards - Buffalo, NY

By Debbie McInnis

Specified Awards - Amateur Division

- Best AVSA Registered Hybrid Collection \$300 -
Vladimir & Tatiana Kalkin (Russia)
2nd Best Russian Registered Hybrid Collection -
\$200 - Vladimir & Tatiana Kalkin (Russia)
3rd Best Russian Registered Hybrid Collection -
\$100 - Vladimir & Tatiana Kalkin (Russia)
Best Holtkamp Collection - \$300 -
Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
2nd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$200 -
Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
3rd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$100 -
Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
Best Buckeye Collection \$200 -
Pat Hancock (OH)
2nd Best Buckeye Collection - \$100 -
Pat Hancock - (OH)
Best Robinson Collection - \$200 The Violet
Barn - Ralph & Olive Ma Robinson (NY)
2nd Best Robinson Collection - \$100 The
Violet Barn - Ralph & Olive Ma Robinson (NY)
Best Lyon's Collection - \$200 - Lyndon Lyon
Greenhouses - Paul Sorano (NY)
2nd Best Lyon's Collection - \$100 - Lyndon Lyon
Greenhouses - Paul Sorano (NY)

Specific Variety Awards - Amateur Division

- Best Ozark Sinningia - \$35 -
Dave's Violets David Harris (MO)
Best Happy Crickett - \$10 Town & Country
AVS (OH)
Best Tina (Maas) - \$25 - Janet Riemer (NJ)
Best Rodeo Country - \$75 -
Spring Branch AV Club (TX)
Best Del's Spring Blush - \$50 - Violet
Reflections Group - In memory of Del Setchel
Best Lonestar Twilight - \$50 - Richard and
Anne Nicholas (TX)
Best Lonestar Lady - \$25 - Richard &
Anne Nicholas (TX)
\$50 Best Aca's Libbie - \$50 - Tom & Libbie
Glembocki (NC)
Best Blue Eyed Russian "EK Goluboglazaia
Rossiia" - \$25 - Starz N Streps - Steve &
Donna Turner (SC)

- Best LE Karusel - \$25 - Starz N Streps -
Steve & Donna Turner (SC)
Best Lela Marie - \$50 - Early Bird Violet Club
Best Concord - \$100 - Kazuo Horikoshi (Japan)
Best Bob Serbin - \$25 - John and Doris
Brownlie (Canada)
Best Everdina - \$50 - AV Council of
Southern California
Best Vintage Violet - \$25 - Janet Riemer (NJ)

Specific Awards Commercial Division

- Best Holtkamp Collection - \$300 -
Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
2nd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$200 -
Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
3rd Best Holtkamp Collection - \$100 -
Holtkamp Greenhouses (TN)
Best Lela Marie - \$50 - Early Bird Violet Club

Undesignated Commercial Division

- \$50 - Kathy Lahti

Other Awards - Design Division

- Best Terrarium - \$35 - In Memory of
Mae Mendez - Janet Fox - (CA)
\$50 - Janet Fox - (CA)
\$25 - Janet Riemer - (NJ)

Other Awards - Undesignated

- \$50 - Janet Fox (CA)
\$10 - Linda Kilby (PA)
\$20 - Sandra Pine (NJ)
\$10-Carol McBryde (FL)
\$25 - Fancy Bloomers - Donna Brining (NJ)
\$50 - Tom & Libbie Glembocki (NC)
\$50 - AVS of Minnesota
\$25 - North Star AV Council (MN)

Other Awards Amateur Horticulture

- \$100 - Streptocarpus - Rocky Mountain
AV Council (CO)
\$100 - Ohio State AVS (OH)

An Open Letter to Joe Bruns, Creator of First Class African Violet Software

By Bruce Pearson

Dear Joe,

First of all, I would like to thank you for all the hard work that has gone on to create First Class for African violet growers. It is a tool I certainly could not operate without. Printing professional looking labels for the leaves I sell over the Internet is priceless. I get compliments almost every day from people receiving my leaves, and commenting on the labels.

Several months ago I purchased a printer (HP Envy 4520) to just print First Class labels. I was always forgetting to put label paper into my everyday printer or forgetting to take paper out and wasting not only the label paper but ink. My new printer did a fine job.

Then one day without warning, it started printing only the beautiful color pictures and none of the description. I went to the settings to look and see if I had accidentally checked something off. Found nothing. I called several users of First Class and describe the problem to see if they had any suggestions. They asked if I had restarted the program. I do this, but to no avail. I even restarted the computer, still no luck. I check the router cables, and even think it could be a problem with the Wi Fi, as it too is new, and the printer is wireless. Maybe something happened during our recent experiences with Hurricane Irma. After all, we were without electricity for seven days and the Internet for a few days longer. Let me tell you, that was tough.

I figured it had to be something wrong with the software, so I am writing you describing the problem as best I can.

I am finding it hard to do business without these

labels. I tried again the next day after turning my computer off and letting it rest all night. Am I showing my age? I tried something different and try to print labels on my regular computer. They came out perfectly. So now, is it my new printer, the new Wi Fi extender or a glitch with First Class and the printer? I fiddle around more. (I am in that age group where most older people are not comfortable with computer operation and younger people are mostly very comfortable and knowledgeable with the computer. (Guess that puts me in the danger zone).

I try printing on the new printer something in a "Word" document. (Sounds like I know what I am talking about!) It prints only in colors...frustrating. Then my regular printer starts not printing in black, only colors, and then Bingo...mystery solved...I suddenly realize...the printers are out of black ink! Sure enough, both print perfectly when supplied with ink. (At least, Joe, I had the printers plugged in.)

Joe, I bet you could tell many stories of people's experiences asking you to find answers about First Class. Enter the writing contest, you could win.

Floracordially yours,

Bruce Pearson

Tropical World Nursery

1162 Hyde Park Rd

Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470

Email: TropicalWrld@gmail.com

Website: TropicalWorldusa.com

PS. To AVSA readers that do not have First Class, order it, and add the phone app also. It is so useful not only for labels but most helpful for every day usage in growing African violets.



The Secret of Good Growing: Consistency

By Paul Kroll

From the *Violet Connection*, Volume 65, Issue 2 March 2017

Many years ago, the Western New York African Violet Society (previous to our becoming affiliated with the Gesneriad Society) had several guest speakers, as we continue to do to this day. One of my all time favorite speakers is Betty Tapping. Betty no longer grows plants, having become allergic to some soil-born factors, which caused problems beyond her control.

Betty was a master judge for the Gesneriad Society and the African Violet Society. She also was a judging school teacher, a superb teacher! Betty still lives in Toronto, Ontario, and enjoys company whenever we can visit. She is 90 years young; the same age as the Queen of England.

Betty, Monte Watler, the Brownlies and others came to our club meetings and gave programs for us. I can still remember Betty and Monte bringing large plants to show and tearing them apart in front of our eyes. We all went home with cuttings! These spectacular programs opened eyes, opened ears and taught us all wonderful growing techniques, great soil mixes, specific requirements of plants, whether species or hybrids.

Goodness! How do these wonderfully successful growers do it all? How do they manage to grow so many plants so well?

The differing requirements of plants - species and/or hybrids - of any genus require us, as growers, to learn about them and what they need. My neighbor across the road plants geraniums in the shade and impatiens in the sun and wonders why they do not grow well.

"Hello! You are not growing according to the specific needs of the plant."

Beyond this basic knowledge, there is so very, very much to be learned about each of the plants we grow: warm, cool, high humidity, edge of shelf, higher light, lower light, etc.

Oh no! This is not the end. We still need to

know more and provide the plants with more accurate conditions for their optimum performance.

Day length, or the hours our lights are on above the plants, is important. Some plants need higher light than others. That higher light requirement may mean four tubes instead of two, or simply moving the plant to the center or end of the tubes or shelf. Some plants seem to grow best in natural light, if your home and window locations can provide the proper conditions for them.

Soil requirements are different for some plants. This opens a whole new topic of watering techniques, watering frequency, etc. Suffice it to say that wick watering plants requires a very loose soil. Other techniques of watering may use a slightly denser soil. You have to decide which way you will water and then determine how often watering is necessary.

The majority of the Canadian growers use the Fisher's mix and that requires saucer watering every four days. Ask Doris Brownlie about it; she has her pocket calendar marked way in advance for watering days. Betty Tapping used to tell us that if it was watering day, it had to be done, even after returning home from a meeting that lasted late into the evening.

I have worked out a soil mix that allows me to water once a week, every Monday morning, come hell or high water! Occasionally I will have to water a heavily blooming plant or a large plant mid-week, if it won't make it until Monday morning. I make no other plans for Monday mornings.

Temperature is important, too. With some experimentation, you can determine you're growing area(s) high and low temperatures and adjust things to the liking of the plants. I know several growers who run their lights at night instead of during the normal daylight hours, etc. Wrapping

the light stands with a heavy duty plastic, or encasing your growing area in plastic to hold in the heat will work as well. Years ago, when I was growing in a cool area of the basement, I built my plant room [plastic stapled to a wooden frame] around the hot water tank to get more heat where it was needed. It worked!

Please remember to test your soil and your water for its pH. Yes! Your water, too! Most growers will test their soil mixes, but many do not realize that the water must also be tested. Most of the African violets and gesneriads we grow prefer a pH of 6.8 to 7.0 of both soil and water. Fertilizer

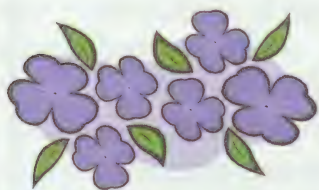
is most available to the plants when these two pH requirements are met.

Fertilizer is a topic unto itself. I will not get into that here, but rotation of fertilizers on a weekly basis, will help to broaden the nutrients available to the plants, so long as the pH of soil and water are within the proper range.

All things considered, once again, the secret to growing good-looking plants is consistency!

The more consistent you keep your light, temperature, water and soil, the better the plants will grow and respond.

Good growing to all!



DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL TALENTS TO SHARE WITH AVSA?

By Sue Ramser

The African Violet Society of America is always looking for members who have a little time they would share with us. Have you wondered how you could help AVSA in addition to your special talents in growing our favorite houseplants, the African violet or the other Gesneriad? Go to the AVSA Website and complete an application to be considered for a position as a Director or Officer. The Nominating Committee will then consider your application to represent your area of the country. Also, please let us know any special expertise you may have: are you a writer; are you a parliamentarian; are you a business person with project management skills or other leadership skills; are you an accountant, a bookkeeper, a CPA or a financial advisor? Do you have other special talents or expertise in the areas of photography, social media, marketing, technology or fundraising that you

would like to share with AVSA to help grow our Society? There are times when AVSA needs to call upon our members who have special talents and expertise but we do not know who you are. Contact any of the Executive Committee and share this information with us (we are listed on the AVSA Website and in the *African Violet Magazine*). There also might be a committee that needs your special talents. These committees are: Advertising, Booster Fund, Building Maintenance Fund, Boyce Edens Research Fund, Tinari Endowment Fund, Membership and Promotion, Publications, Research, Commercial, Convention Show Awards, Library, Shows and Judges, Society Awards, Internet, Technology, Affiliate, Plant Registration & Master List, Archives, and Policies & Procedures. Your AVSA Executive Committee is listed in the front of the *AVM*. We want to hear from you, our membership.

HYDROPONIC STORES AREN'T JUST ABOUT POT

By Mary Thompson

Let me tell you about my local hydroponics store and Nick.

I happened upon the local hydroponics store, Garden All Year, several years ago when they had a small retail store in town and I decided to mosey in. I was amazed at what they carried that we normally have to order online. It was a fun little store and Penny and Jim, the owners were delightful. In fact, Penny was anxiously awaiting the arrival of her grandchild who was born later that day.

I had so much fun I told our small little club and we planned a field trip to the store. The store was Penny's charge while the warehouse was Jim's. They gave us a 10% discount and to this day when a member goes in and identifies themselves as a club member we receive the discount.

The store closed several months later and the warehouse was our next stop. There we met Nick, who as we have discovered, is a wealth of information when it comes to nutrition. As you can imagine, marijuana is a big industry for hydroponic stores, but in our area wine grapes are a huge industry and they too are clients. When I asked Nick what he would like people to know he said hydroponic stores aren't just about marijuana.

We have no nurseries left in our town and just a handful left in the county so it is harder to find supplies unless you can get them at Walmart or Home Depot. Of course, a lot of what we use is not available at those stores. I have found so many

products such as Dyna Gro, Dyna Gro Neem oil, Superthrive, Aza Max, and large bags of perlite and vermiculite to name a few. The last time I went in he had three different sizes of Physan 20. I once told Nick I liked Jack's 20-20-20 fertilizer and the next time I went in he had it. I live in Central California and occasionally go to Sacramento. I was driving 8 miles each way off the freeway to get a bale of Pro Mix BX every time I went north. Lo and behold I discovered they carry that too. In addition, if I go to their website and order something it takes me to Amazon and I can order anything from there. The store is very close to my house so I don't have to do that. This has proved to be a great place to get trays, domes and get educated about fertilizer, bug products and more.

As time has gone on, I have educated Nick on African Violets and have given him a few. They are doing well, although grooming is something he needs to learn, but working at the store 6 days a week and a family man that has not been a priority.

I encourage you to check out your local hydroponics store if you haven't. You never know, you might find someone working there who has an interest in violets. Renee, from Fresno, found one of the staff at her hydroponics store was growing violets and he came to their sale & show last year.

Mary is President and founder of the Central Coast African Violet Society in Central California.



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Geneva – \$100-\$499

Janice K. Tyler

In memory of Kent Stork

Nancy & John Hayes

In memory of Kent Stork

Windsor African Violet Society

In memory of Kent Stork, Bunny Shepard, & Terry Dickey



Multicolor – \$50-\$99

Wisconsin Council of African Violet Clubs

Kathy Lahti

In memory of Sharon Johnson

Columbus African Violet Society



Two-Tone – \$25-\$49

Amethyst African Violet Club

Oshkosh Violet Society

In lieu of judging fee for Kathy Lahti

Metropolitan St. Louis African Violet Council

In memory of Kent Stork

San Diego North County African Violet Society

In memory of Irving Tashlick

First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls (TX)

In memory of Catherine Porter

Sue Ramser

In memory of

Catherine Porter Morgan Simmons

Marge & Tom Savage

In memory of Kent Stork

Spring Branch African Violet Club

Richmond African Violet Society

In memory of Ray Dogget

Patty's Plants & Antiques

In memory of Kent Stork



Thumbprint – Under \$25

Janice Sorensen

In memory of Kent Stork

Betsy Branson

Kris Johnson

JoAnne D'Angelo

AVSA Office Hours
Monday - Thursday
9:00 am - 4:00 pm



Photo Credit: Winston Goretsky

Lil Glimpse o' Spring

Exhibited by: Angela Newell

Hybridized by: Paul Sorano

Semiminiature

AVSA Library Committee Requests Your Input

By Penny Smith-Kerker

I have to admit, I was a little apprehensive when Anne Nicholas texted me that she needed to have a "conversation" with me when I arrived in Orlando for the 2017 AVSA convention. When we were able to see each other, I was pleasantly surprised when Anne asked me if I would be willing to be the Library Committee Chair. I had already been thinking about how to remain actively involved with AVSA, when my position as an AVSA director would end in 2018, and Anne had proposed a great solution. Without too much hesitation, I told Anne I would be happy to be the AVSA Library Committee Chair.

Anne has been a wonderful chair of the Library Committee, on which she has served for many years. She put together a team of hardworking, resourceful committee members, that I am very thankful are remaining on the committee, because I will need their help and expertise. Thank you, Anne for your leadership and guidance!

In the September-October 2017 AVM, Anne summarized the accomplishments of the Library Committee during her tenure and outlined some projects in the works and being planned. As the new Library Committee Chair, I would very much like input from the AVSA membership on what programs/products you would like to see the committee pursue. I have MANY questions:

What content is needed?

- What information do you need/want?
- How would you like to have content delivered?
- How do you use the current library committee products?
- What is the optimum length for a program?
- What are the impediments to accessing or using the current library products?
- For quite a few years, the Library Committee has produced documentation of the annual AVSA conventions (CD/DVD/thumb drive). I think it is important to continue to document the convention, but are there new ways/formats for doing this we should pursue?
- How can we best utilize new technology?

Please let myself, and Vice-Chair of the library committee, Paula Bal, know your thoughts about what the library committee can do to best serve AVSA and its membership. Or talk to one of the members of the library committee: Marjorie Bullard, Barbara Burde, Janet Castiglione, Richard Craft, Libbie Glembocki, Tom Glembocki, Julie Jones, Anne Nicholas, Dr. Richard Nicholas, and Andrea Worrell.

Contact information:

Email: avsalibrarycomm@gmail.com

Phone: Penny Smith-Kerker • (512) 914-4488

Paula Bal • (732) 771-7117

Paula and I hope to hear from you soon!



A Convention To Remember: Part 1

By Kurt Jablonski
Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

The 71st AVSA Convention in Orlando was just that, a convention to remember. For those of us that were fortunate to experience it firsthand, I know it will go down in the books but for those unable to come I want you to feel included. I hope this recap whets your appetites and inspires you to come to the 72nd show next year in Buffalo. There were several highlights of this year's convention aside from the show (don't worry we'll get to that later) that must be covered in detail. First, attendees were treated to a hotel complex no one will ever forget. While it was beautiful it was nothing short of a maze. Several times I didn't know which way was up because it was a difficult place to navigate. I think I even lost a few pounds from walking so much (not that that's a bad thing). But it was beautiful, state of the art and featured a very real and very life-like statue of Vin Diesel. Lots of people got selfies with him (I won't name names). The large pool out back was an excellent spot to lounge and relax in between all the exciting events going on during the week.

As always there are lots of activities planned for attendees. Convention tours are always a highlight for those of us that like to get out and see the host state's landmarks and attractions. Lots of folks make extended trips out of convention. It really is a great excuse to stay a little longer and enjoy all the different sights. I heard from several excited people that visited Universal City Walk and the Blue Man Group show that it was one of the best they've seen in ages. Not only did people get to shop and eat but they were front and center to the



Top Convention Winners: (Left to Right) - Dmitry Ozherelyev with N-Avatar, Carolee Carter with S. 8 clone Cha Simba, Kurt Jablonski with Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler and Rob's Boolaroo, Anne Nicholas with Jolly Lulu and Elmer Godeny with Primulina bipinnatifida.

show of a lifetime. How neat! The twister air boat tour stood out to convention attendees as well. Cruising down the waters of Florida's St. John's River with wind in your hair and the sun shining down on you was truly memorable; something that we don't get to do everyday. Having the opportunity to try new things is one of the several draws to an AVSA Convention. AVSA makes it very easy for you too.

All the hard work of planning tours is done and all you have to do is pick the tours you like, sign up and enjoy.

Several events went on in the hotel as part of the convention. One I know that is very popular and entertaining is the Luncheon Auction. Imagine Bill Price, your auctioneer, enticing you to open those wallets and be the big bidder and hopefully winner of rare, collectible and new plant material that you MUST have. I know that several people have gotten carried away in the past and spent a little more than planned. This year was no different. However, it is all in good fun and what a great way to help support AVSA with your purchases. Next year I plan on attending this luncheon. Who knows there might just be that one new African Violet with deep red blooms, purple puff fantasy and a bright green edge on variegated foliage just waiting for me? We have to thank Bill for his years of commitment to the luncheon auction. They say the auctioneer has the ability to entice bidders to bid just one more time. Thanks Bill!

Every year AVSA puts together several programs that convention goers may attend based on their interests. The speakers are usually well

known growers and designers that impart their expertise to the crowd. This year several interesting programs were available for all to attend and enjoy. Barbara Werness did a presentation "Helpful Show Preparation Tips." Some interesting take-a-ways were 1). to line the slip pot of showplants with plastic wrap so that the plant does not dry out during the show and that critters don't make their way into the pot, 2). to increase humidity, dome stubborn blooming plants before the show and 3). to treat for thrips put plant in a covered box and spray with a peripherum type or oil spray. She covered all topics including design and gesneriads and lots of valuable information was up for grabs at her talk.

For those that were interested in the more scientific and technical aspects of growing, Stephen Gonzalez-Costa did a program on "Water Quality & Fertilizer – Effects on African Violets." He covered pH in depth as well as Total Dissolved Solids (TDS). My take away was that without the proper range in pH and TDS the fertilizer that you give your plants goes unused because it is not available for the plant to take up. Kurt Jablonski's program "African Violets Need Haircuts Just Like People Do" on Saturday covered African Violet Grooming and how important it is to give your plants constant, consistent care and groom, groom, groom. By tak-

ing off the bottom three leaves every couple of months the plant's crown grows faster resulting in a larger more perfect showplant. Linda Hall's "How Unique Are Your African Violets?" was right up the alley of those interested in wasp, bustleback and longifolia type African Violets. Linda gave a detailed list of the different hybrids with these unique foliage and blossom types.

The final program of the week was "Judging by the Book" by Pat Hancock and Paul Kroll. With so many variations to the judging of shows across the country it was very refreshing to have Pat and Paul address issues in judging that are explicitly answered in our handbook. Pat's unique approach was to present her program in a situational context. Through the years Pat has heard several comments from and situations with judges that she explained in a question and answer format. One thing that I thought was important was that point-scoring plants is imperative and voting for top show awards is wrong. Paul Kroll gave an in-depth talk on judging designs talking about what to look for and how to judge designs. He explained how judges can look at designs and use the scale of points in the handbook to correctly score each entry.

(Editor's Note: Read Part 2 of Kurt's article in the January/February AVM)



Visit the AVSA'S Website:
www.avsa.org

Remembering My First Leaf

By Nate Cave



#1 First Leaf

home with me. By the time I figured out what to do with the plants, all but two had gone to the big compost heap in the sky.

In the summer of 2013 I began to realize that another one was on the way out, from what I now am pretty sure was root rot. I decided drastic action was needed. I lopped the poor thing's little head off, and put it in a glass of water, just like I remember grandma doing when they got too tall. Just for extra security, I started three leaves as well. Fast forward to autumn of that

Who remembers that first little sign of life from the first leaf you ever tried to propagate? Mine was in October of 2013. The plant was a NOID that belonged to my grandma Cave. When she had passed away in 2008, I took all of the African violets from her apartment, and brought them

year, and the plant had rooted nicely, and been placed in a pot. One morning I realized that the one surviving leaf finally had a little plant poking up through the soil. Seemingly overnight, life had happened. I could have shouted from the rooftop! I think that was the point at which I was hooked.

I look at the picture of that little plantlet emerging from the soil now, and I think how did it ever make it? The soil it is in, is almost all peat, and it is soaking wet. The petiole is a mile long, and the leaf is probably being held up by a plant marker. A far cry from how my leaves are started now. And there are oodles of them. I couldn't begin to guess how many leaves I have down at the moment. Some in deli containers, some in solo cups, and others in snack baggies full of soil.



#3 FEB 2014



#2 AUG 2013

One of my favorite parts about growing African violets is that you are always learning new things, and adapting your methods. If you're just starting out, don't be afraid to try something different. Something that someone else says is wrong, just might work great for you. As I always say, African violets are a renewable resource!



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Optimara Little Hopi II

Exhibited by: Penny Smith-Kerker

Hybridized by: Holtkamp

Semiminiature

HOW I BECAME INVOLVED WITH AFRICAN VIOLETS AND AVSA

By Sue Ramser - AVSA First Vice President

My interest in growing African violets began in 1972. We were living in an apartment here in Wichita Falls, Texas. We were close friends with a number of our neighbors who also had small children. I had helped a neighbor with an issue they were having and as a "Thank You" they gave me two beautiful African violet plants. They probably came from a florist or garden center and had very little instructions for their care included. I didn't have a clue how to take care of these beautiful plants (this after all, was before the age of Google and the Internet!).

Then, a few days later, I was reading our local newspaper and there was an announcement about a meeting of The First African Violet Society of Wichita Falls, inviting anyone interested in African violets to attend an upcoming meeting. At the time they were meeting in members' homes. I called the number listed in the newspaper article and asked for directions to the member's home. I attended this meeting and I was sent home with information about how to care for these lovely plants, maybe I won the African violet door prize, I don't remember. They invited me to attend their next meeting. I was hooked! I attended the next meeting, joined the club and have been a member since.

Then came time for their annual show! I asked questions about how to enter my plants and was told "just bring them and we will enter them." There had not been extensive information about the judging process and all that goes into entering a show. Needless to say, I didn't receive a blue ribbon for my entry. I was disappointed. I joined AVSA and started reading the *African Violet Magazine*. The more I read, the more I wanted to read and learn. Soon my collection of African violets had grown (we bought a house and light stands because the windowsills would not accommodate my African violets). Then, I read about an African Violet Judging School to be held in Houston. I thought, I'll order the *Handbook for Judges*, study it, and attend the school! I can do this and learn how to judge these beautiful plants and grow an award-winning plant. (At the time we

had several club members who grew very large standard varieties and won all the ribbons at the show.) I had a college roommate who lived in Houston that had been inviting us to come for a visit. I thought that would make a nice mini vacation for my husband and small kids (my roommate and her husband lived in the country and raised a variety of animals which would be fun for my kids).

I attended the Judging School taught by Charles Day, took the test, and made a respectable grade on it. Soon after that I was talking with my Mom who was an Avon Representative in Newcastle, Texas. She was telling me about one of her friends and customer, whose son grew beautiful African violets in Mesquite, Texas. Soon after this discussion I read in the *AVM* about the North Texas African Violet Judges Council. I attended this meeting and learned that my Mom's friend's son was at the meeting - Bill Foster! Bill and I attended the same school in Newcastle, back in the day.

From that day Bill Foster and I became close friends, we consider ourselves "cousins" since we do have common relatives. Bill has been my friend, mentor, and African violet teacher for these past years. He encouraged me to submit my name for a Director of AVSA many years ago. The years that I first served AVSA as a Director on the Board, Bill was serving on the Board and also Judy Partain. We have often remarked how interesting that three people from the small school and town of Newcastle, Texas, were serving on the African Violet Society of America Board, an international organization!

When I was serving as the Lone Star African Violet Council Newsletter Editor a number of years ago, I attended an AVSA Convention where Neva Anderson presented a program on preparing Newsletters and Magazines. I learned many useful things about newsletter preparation from her.

Over the years there have been many more people in the African violet world who have been my mentors. I will not attempt to name them all here lest I forget someone.

Day to Day Care of African Violets

By Ruth Coulson from *The African Violet*
Official Journal of the African Violet Association of Australia

We often talk about how to plant a leaf, how to repot, even about how to fertilize, and so on. But let us not forget the need to look after our African violets on virtually daily basis, not just in bursts of repotting and so on.

Watering

The first essential - Without adequate water, the plant will not thrive, will not grow and flower properly and eventually may die. Decide upon what is the best watering system for you. You need something that is simple to carry out to ensure that it does not get forgotten or put aside when it should actually be attended to.

The options are - top watering, bottom watering, wick watering, Texas watering, capillary matting - none are inherently better than others. It is really a matter of which is easier for the grower, and thus most likely to be carried out when necessary. My vote is always for wick watering.

Fertilizing

This is almost equally important. Just as people need food and drink, so do violets. Decide upon a fertilizer/fertilizer program.

The most suitable fertilizer is a fairly balanced one. If you go chasing rainbows, trying this and that because more of one element than another in the fertilizer will be good - well expect some problems unless you are particularly knowledgeable in this field.

Leaching

Watering & Fertilizing can cause a problem with an imbalance of elements in the potting mix so that the excess needs to be washed away from time to time. The larger the collection of plants the more difficult it is to carry this out regularly, but it really does improve general health.

Grooming

Here is where you can do a little bit of fiddling

every day. These are some of the things that may need to be done:

- Remove dead or dying leaves and flowers. This is essential as rotting flowers and dead leaves not only look ugly but may end up damaging otherwise healthy leaves.
- Straighten/rearrange leaves into their correct position to improve symmetry
- At the same time as the above, assist any flower buds that are developing under leaves to have more space. Use a leaf support where necessary - both to support the leaves to a good shape and to ensure the plant has enough space to develop properly without getting damaged.
- Remove side-shoots (suckers) when they are still small and do not distort the leaf pattern, remembering that a rosette plant will normally perform better if kept to a single crown.
- Check whether the level of the potting mix in the pot is too low or too high. Adjust.
- Check whether the plant is set too low or too high in the pot. Adjust.
- Decide whether to disbud. Disbudding is a way of ensuring the plant will look its best and be in flower at a particular time, not necessarily for show. Young plants develop more quickly and will have a better leaf form if they are allowed to grow without being deformed by emerging flower buds. When the plant is more fully developed would be the time to see your reward with a big bunch of flowers atop a beautiful set of leaves.
- Use a brush to remove dust and dirt from the surface of the leaves.
- Check whether the plant is doing anything unusual.
- If the flower color is wrong for the description of the plant, it might be wrongly named. If the plant already flowered with the correct color, you may have a sport and will have to decide whether or not to keep it.

Exceptions

The following are not usually sports - they simply demonstrate a reaction to the current growing conditions and you can normally expect the original flower color and type to reappear when the conditions moderate.

- Fantasy violets with very little fantasy in hot weather.
- Thumb-print violets with almost white flowers in cold weather.
- Geneva violets (white edged petals) whose edge virtually disappears in hot weather.
- Variegated African violets producing plain green leaves in hot weather.
- If the flowers are extra small and perhaps not formed correctly, this could be a reaction to hot weather. (More common with trailers and miniature/semiminature violets). If the conditions are not particularly hot, you will need to see whether there is something wrong with the general health of the plant. Check the potting mix for signs of infestation, make sure you have been fertilizing and giving enough water and light.
- If the leaves are growing to an unsatisfactory pattern check for side-shoots and remove them as mentioned above.
- Notice the health of the plant. By doing a little grooming every day, you have the chance to look at the plants. This way you will notice anything amiss. Mostly these things can be dealt with immediately. Where infestation or disease is present they should be dealt with as soon as possible. And dealt with properly, usually involving three sprayings.
- Is the foliage too yellow indicating lack of fertilizer, or problems with the roots?
- Are the leaves soft and limp, indicating lack of water, or possible root rot?
- Is the center of the plant okay, or is it distorted, hairy, etc., indicating mites?
- Are there white "cotton balls" on the surface of the leaves (usually the underneath surface) indicating mealy bugs?
- Are there white "things" floating on top of the water in wick-watered plants, indicating soil mealy bugs?

- Are there patches of white powder appearing on leaves or flowers, indicating powdery mildew?

Spraying should not be a routine. Only spray when necessary and then spray according to the instructions on the package of the product you are using. Remember to use the correct spray for the purpose.

Finding the Right Position

This can involve quite a bit of moving the plants around from spot to spot, or swapping them about. There are various factors that make a position "right" for an African violet. Although it is possible to give guide lines, the final indication comes from the plants themselves. The right spot will very likely vary from one cultivar to another.

Checking the Light

If the leaves are growing upwards with long stems that usually indicates lack of light. It may be that the light is not strong enough, or that its duration is too short. Try different plants in different spots to see how well they adapt.

If the plant tends to "face" to one side, it is indicating that it needs to be turned more regularly so that over time it gets even light on all its leaves.

Even on shelves lit with artificial light it is a good idea to turn the plants from time to time. You may also find that the light is more intense in the very centre of the shelf than it is at the edges or ends of the tubes. This is a case where you need to check which plants like a spot better than others.

Temperature

This is particularly something where some cultivars may be more definite in their likes and dislikes than others. Variegated plants are more fussy than plants with all green leaves. You may find that to maximize the variegation in summer you need to keep them in your coolest spot. In winter they may need the warmest place so as to keep some green in the leaves.

If growing any of the African violet species, you will find that *Saintpaulia rupicola* likes warmth all year around and it may be difficult to keep at its best in winter.

Similarly, *S. shumensis* and *S. velutina* like cooler temperatures and sometimes suffer in summer.

There is a surprising variation in temperature in different parts of your growing area – whether that is on window-sills, on a stand with artificial light or anywhere else you may choose. Do some tests with a thermometer in the warmest part of the day and the coolest part of the evening.

This turning and/or moving of position is a very important part of the daily care of your plants. It will certainly lead to better plants over time.

Different categories of African violets

All of the above points apply pretty much

equally to standard rosettes, miniature and semiminature rosettes, and to trailing African violets.

The only differences in care would be in rigorously keeping miniatures and semiminatures to size, in realizing that trailers need not have strict symmetry, but need to have a balanced and fairly circular growth and flowering pattern.

Some people believe that trailing African violets need more fertilizer than the other plants. I haven't found this to be so myself, but that is perhaps just me. If you are interested in developing the best plants you can, you might like to make some cautious experiments with this aspect of their cultivation.



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Episcia 'Cleopatra' Canadian Clone

Exhibited by: Robert McMeel

A SUMMER ROAD TRIP TO MY FIRST AVSA CONVENTION

By Angela Newell

newellang@gmail.com

(Member of Tampa AVS and New Dixie Member)

(Reprinted from *The Petal*, publication of the Tampa AVS)

I recently attended the 2017 AVSA Convention held in Orlando, Florida, at the Wyndham Orlando Resort, with some of my family. This was the very first AVSA Convention that we had attended.

The experience was everything I had hoped for; it was exciting, with beautiful exhibits entered in the Show, very educational workshops, and wonderful food served at each of the meals that my family signed up for. I met so many new people, made lots of new friends, and was honored to be seated at the dinner table for the Installation Banquet with the incoming new AVSA President Richard Nicholas, his wife Anne, their daughter, son-in-law, two granddaughters, and Anne's sister and brother-in-law. My husband and I enjoyed meeting them, sharing a meal with them, and having wonderful conversations with all of them. The installation of the officers' portion of the evening was a privilege to be present at. And the raffle, which ended the evening, was a lot of fun, also.

Backing up to the beginning of this experience was the planning and anxious awaiting for the AVSA Convention date to arrive. Even a job change with its uncertainty of time off, family needs at home, and a change in plans of how our dogs, birds, and fish would be cared for didn't stop us from attending the Convention.

I sure made my share of "Rookie Mistakes," too (you know, the 1st time showing at a National Convention type of mistakes). What mistakes? Well, like not packing the violets better for their journey from their comfortable A/C home in Tampa, FL, to the warm car and the long car ride to Orlando, FL. The check-in at the hotel took so much longer than I anticipated it would take and we left the plant kids waiting in the car. Ding! Another Rookie Mistake! Don't ever leave your

children, your pets, or your violets in a car with the engine off when it's Orlando in late May and hot and humid outside!)

Once we were checked into the hotel, I went upstairs to check all of us into the AVSA Convention at the AVSA Registration area, and my husband and daughter went to find which of the buildings of this hotel our room was located in and unload the violets and our luggage. It was tremendously exciting to personally meet and speak to Amy Carruth and Ruth Rumsey from the AVSA Office.

Candace Baldwin located me and gave me an overview of what I could expect and experience at the Convention. Candace is the official "Welcoming Committee" for 1st time AVSA Convention attendees. It was so much fun meeting her and talking to her. I knew that the next couple of days would be exciting, overwhelming, and "running on caffeine and adrenaline" so that I didn't miss a single moment of the Convention! I planned to live and breathe violet culture at this Convention from anyone and every source available to me. Oh yeah, at that moment, I did have that "deer-in-the-headlights" feeling. I had waited what seemed forever to be able to attend an AVSA Convention, and now I was here at my very first one, and in my home state.

I hadn't even planned on bringing any plants to exhibit. I kept thinking, "I'm not good enough to compete with anyone at this level" and "My plants aren't good enough to compete with anyone else's plants at this level."

All that negativity going on in my head. But I summoned up the courage to bring my plants, because I realized that this Convention and the Show itself is not about competing against anyone or anyone's plants, or even about winning a blue

ribbon or a prize. The Convention is all about friendship and socializing with people who love African violets and being immersed in violet culture for a few days. The Show is for everyone, whether you exhibit or not. Entering one exhibit, or several exhibits, is about setting a goal for yourself to raise a violet to the best of your ability and attain the satisfaction of exhibiting your love, devotion, and care for that plant. It doesn't matter if you don't win a blue ribbon. If you set and reach your goal to raise even just one plant and enter a show, you and your plant are both winners!

At about this time, while I was still in the AVSA Registration area, my husband and daughter located me and we made our way back to the hotel lobby to think about dinner plans. And who would have thought that Vin Diesel, the actor, would be in the hotel lobby? Oh, my gosh! I got the chance to have my picture taken with him! (I didn't have the AVSA ribbons attached to my AVSA neck wallet yet, so I didn't have it on for our picture together.) Okay, so it wasn't really Vin Diesel, but an amazing life-size, life-like wax figure of him. But, he looked pretty real to me!

We went back to the hotel room to check up on the plants before heading out to eat when my heart just sank when I saw my violets! They were showing signs of extreme stress and the leaves and flowers were starting to wilt. I felt sick. What had happened? I started to cry. Ding! The Rookie Mistake alarm went off again. (Put more thought into planning to protect the violets from travel stress.) What was I going to do now? All of my work with the violets to get them to the Convention and it was going to end up like this? My husband kept telling me that the violets would be okay, that they just needed to rest up after their journey.

Early the next morning, I had to rush off to a Judging School being taught by Jim Boyer at the Convention, so I didn't have a chance to check on how the violets had fared through the night. (A few weeks before the Convention, I had decided that learning how plants were judged was a big step in also learning how to grow better plants.) The Judging School lecture was very informative and I learned a lot from Jim about violet-growing

culture. The Judging School exam was tough though, and images of my stressed plants kept haunting me.

After the Judging School session was over, it was time to rush back to the hotel room and assess the violets to see if any of them could be entered in the Show. A quick pep talk from my husband, and from my good friend Terry Jordan, who was also attending the Convention, convinced me to enter the violets no matter what I thought about them.

To my surprise, all the violets looked so much better than they had the night before, although still not quite as good as they looked when we left home. The cold hotel room had been good for the violets. My husband helped me get them into the car again, for the short drive to the hotel building where the entries for the Show were being accepted, and my daughter drove back to Tampa for her college class.

At the Classification and Entries area I hit another snafu. Ding!

The Rookie Mistake alarm went off again! (Always, check, recheck, and quadruple-check what your violet is supposed to be classified as.) I was 500% sure I had a Robinson Collection entry with three semi-miniatures, but it turned out that two were semi-miniatures and one of them was an almost too big to be entered, miniature. Oh, gee!

So, I didn't have a semi-miniature collection, but I entered them individually as two semi-miniatures and one miniature, along with the rest of my violets.

The entries process was stressful for me as each violet was looked over and classified, and finally accepted. And, at some point you do have to let go and leave your plant kids at the "daycare," in the capable hands of someone else.

The next day brought another workshop and the much-anticipated opening of the Sales Room to Convention attendees. I couldn't believe I was in the Sales Room looking, shopping, and just visiting with people for over four hours! My husband and I had to leave because the Sales Room was closing for the day and it was time to get ready for the Awards Banquet.

My husband, daughter, and I were seated at a table with such wonderful people. It was great to

meet and talk with people from other areas of the country who love violets, or were here with someone who love violets.

When it came time for the awards to be presented to winning entries, I was stunned beyond belief that three of my entries received awards, *The Alps*, *Rob's Itchy Britches*, and *Jolly Dear*. I could hardly make it from the table to the front of the room to accept the awards.

The Alps being a big award for me! I was, and still am, so very grateful and pleased for these awards. It is encouragement for me to keep pushing for even better from my violets and myself. I didn't really expect to win anything, it is still not about winning, it's about loving what you are doing.

After the Awards Dinner was concluded, Convention attendees got the privilege of seeing the Show before it officially opened to the public.

The Show Room was spectacular and breathtaking at the same time! I just couldn't believe how beautiful every entry was! Everyone was a winner to me. And of course, I couldn't wait to find my plant kids and say, "Good job!" to them. I was so very surprised to have received a total of seven blue ribbons and one red ribbon (ouch!) for my eight violet entries. Not bad at all for a newbie to an AVSA Convention, as well as being a newbie to showing violets at an AVSA Convention.

The next day was Friday of the Convention, and it brought more workshops and the Luncheon Auction. I had the pleasure of being seated (along with my daughter and husband) with more new friends to meet, as well as some of my local Tampa African Violet Society club members. One of the new friends I met at our table, Amanda Banks, was from the Tidewater African Violet Society in Virginia Beach, Virginia. This particular club had donated one of the Show Awards that I had received for my entry of Rob's Itchy Britches, a miniature. What a privilege and honor to meet and personally thank a representative from a violet club that donated a Convention Award! And the auction itself was so much fun! At one point, my daughter and I were bidding against each other for the same item! This was truly a wonderful afternoon. And now we are back to Saturday, the last

official day of the Convention. More workshops to attend, more time in the Sales Room shopping for plants and visiting with people, seeing some of my friends from my local club, visiting the Showroom again, and attending the AVSA Annual Membership Meeting and Open Forum (which I highly recommend as it gives you an idea of how and why things are done by this organization). It was then time to attend the final event of the Convention, the President's Reception and Hospitality Hour, followed by the Installation Banquet. Then, it was time to pick up my plants from the Showroom for checkout. The check-out process in the Showroom went smoothly and was very organized, despite it being a very rainy night which made transporting the violets a bit more challenging as the Convention area was in a separate building from the hotel rooms. But, we managed it just fine. We said good-bye to as many new friends as we could since we might not see them for a while. It was then Sunday morning and time to checkout from the hotel and pack up the car and the violets, and return home to our "real" lives of work, home, and family responsibilities, and to our dogs, birds, and fish. Once we were back home, the realization hit me that the 2017 AVSA Convention was over and I felt really sad. I also realized, (Ding! Another Rookie Mistake!) that we took very few pictures at the Convention! We just simply forgot about this. The five and a half days that we were there at the Orlando Wyndham Resort for the 2017 AVSA Convention was an amazing and overwhelming experience! I learned so much, met so many new people from all over the country, and even from Russia, and I felt so connected to people I didn't know and an organization so dedicated entirely to the African violet.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage anyone who has never attended an AVSA Convention to attend one, immerse yourself in violet culture, surround yourself with violet people, and come away from the experience encouraged, enriched, and inspired! Even my daughter was very surprised to find out that the age group of attendees at this AVSA Convention ranged from early 20's up to late 80's. And, also, not everyone attending this AVSA Convention entered plants in

the Show. Some of the people that I met who were attending the Convention did not enter exhibits; they came to enjoy being around violets.

I wish to thank everyone who attended the Convention, everyone who entered exhibits in the Show, everyone who made a Show Award donation, and everyone who helped in any way with the Convention for helping to make this 2017 AVSA Convention such a wonderful experience. Thank you also, to AVSA itself for being such a

strong organization, and support to the African violet world. So, if you have never been to an AVSA Convention, make plans to attend one, and plug yourself into as much information and events that you can. I truly hope that you have as wonderful an experience as I did! Going forward, I hope to meet even more new African violet friends at future AVSA-sponsored events and Conventions. Take care and good growing to everyone!



Photo Credit: Neil Lipson

Victorian Ribbons

Exhibited by: Neil Lipson

Hybridized by: S. Sorano

Standard



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Streptocarpus 'Ziva'

Exhibited by: Kathryn Spissman

Jolly Frills

*Exhibited by
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by:
Hortense Pittman
Semiminiature*



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky



LE- Prekrasnaia Kreolka

*Exhibited by:
Debbie McInnis
Hybridized by:
E. Lebetskaia
Standard*

Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

First Vice President's Committees

STANDING COMMITTEES

AVM Advertising - Cindi Novinger

Chair - catechizer@comcast.net

Forwards ads to the **AVM** Editor and maintains up-to-date files on all advertisers, updates the AVSA Website with current advertising rates.

Finance

Terri Post, Chair - postter210@yahoo.com

The Finance Committee acts as advisor to the Treasurer and is familiar with all functions of the Treasurer and oversees the Boyce Edens Research Fund, Booster Fund, Building Maintenance Fund, Tinari Endowment Fund, Ways and Means Committee and Life Membership Investments.

Membership and Promotion

Joyce Stork, Chair - kentsflowers@gmail.com

Stimulates greater interest in African violets and in AVSA membership by encouraging members and affiliated chapters to show well grown violets and to display the **AVM**, encourages distribution of AVSA brochures and promotes AVSA memberships through emblems and other promotional materials.

Publications

Sue Hoffmann, Chair - violetsue@outlook.com

The Publications Committee is responsible for the publication AVSA literature that the Board of Directors authorizes. Reviews and coordinates committee publications such as Affiliate, Annual Index, Culture Folders, Guide for Affiliate Presidents and AVSA Representatives and is responsible for selecting award winning articles appearing in the **AVM**.

Research

Dr. Jeff Smith - jsmith4@bsu.edu

Coordinates efforts to publicize the Boyce Edens Research Fund and recruits research proposals from qualified individuals and organizations.

SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Annual Index - Chair is a designated member of the Publications Committee

Compiles an index of articles from the African Violet Magazine, January through November issues in an Excel spreadsheet for a searchable database on the AVSA website.

Best Varieties - Chair is a designated member of the Publications Committee

Compiles a list of 25 favorite African violet varieties submitted by affiliates and members.

Booster

Dianna Walston

Chair - 2210 S. Courtland Ave., Kokomo, IN 46902

The purpose of the committee is to encourage members to donate more than dues to AVSA for special needs other than the everyday operation of the Society. Donations are compiled and reported in the **AVM**.

Boyce Edens Research Fund

Karen Broadway, Chair - karensavon@cox.net

The Boyce Edens Research Fund awards grants in support of research projects related to the African violet. Support is derived from individual and affiliate donations sent to the BERF Chair as well as from a portion of each commercial member's dues. Boyce Edens Research Fund also provides funds for the AVSA Scholarship.

Building Maintenance Fund

Susan Hapner, Chair - hapnersb1823@att.net

The purpose of this Committee is to encourage members to contribute funds to the maintenance of the permanent home for AVSA office.

Scholarship

Dr. Charles Ramser

Chair - Charles.ramser@mwsu.edu

The Scholarship Committee provides financial scholarship awards annually to college students who are majoring in ornamental horticulture,

floriculture or an equivalent program. The Boyce Edens Research Fund provides funding for the Scholarship.

Tally Time - Susan Anderson
Chair - sanderson122@cox.net

Tally Time is an annual list of the top 10 - 15 show winners of AVSA Collections Awards both gold and purple rosettes, Best in Show, Best Standard, Best Miniature, Best Semiminiature, Best Trailer and Best Species.

Tinari Endowment Advancement

This Committee recognizes bequest donors to the AVSA Tinari Endowment Fund through the Legacy Society.

Tinari Endowment Fund

Janet Riemer, Chair - J.Riemer@comcast.net

Oversees contributions to specific AVSA Endowment Funds such as The Legacy Society of the Tinari Endowment Advancement Committee.

Ways and Means

Glenda Williams

Chair - ambrosiaviolets@yahoo.com

Researches and recommends items for sale at the AVSA Convention and through the AVSA Office. These items are offered for sale at the Ways and Means Table at the AVSA Conventions.



AVSA BOOSTER FUND

Dianna Walston • 2210 S. Courtland Ave., Kokomo, IN 46902

Donations received July 1, 2017 - August 31, 2017 • Donations Total: \$426.00



Multicolor- \$50-\$599

Judith Hess, Wisconsin Council of AV Clubs,
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*In memory of Sharon Johnson from
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The Booster Fund's purpose is for members who wish to contribute more than dues to AVSA activities. This fund goes into the general treasury and supports AVSA.

2018 Contest

By Pat Hancock

In each of the next few issues of the AVM, I will be introducing two of the eight hybridizers who will be providing the prizes for our 2018 writing contest, along with pictures of their hybrids. This year, the hybrids you will receive are very diverse – ranging from *Sinningia Speciosa* (Florist's Gloxinia) to "Imps" violets.

It is my hope that the article you write will also be more diverse and will include more of our Gesneriad family and how you grow and care for them.

At the Ohio State show in September, I spoke to Jay Sespico, who resides in Florida and hybridizes many different Gesneriad Species. He showed me pictures of his many hybrids – trust me – they are very special. Jay's "violet" experience was mostly with trailers, winning many Best in Show's with "Rob's Gundaroo." Some of his future goals are fragrance, red, white and blue, and also, yellow Gloxinias. He began hybridizing in 2013 and his progress is amazing. He will supply *Sinningia Speciosa* tubers of his hybrids for our contest winners. His hybrids carry the prefix "Rock."



Sora Addison Rose

The second hybridizer is Barbara Werness. Barbara lives in Minnesota and she is the teacher who gives the Senior Judging Exam. Barbara has been growing violets since the late 1960's. She began hybridizing about 2000 and she uses the prefix "Sora." I asked her what the name "Sora" means and she replied that it is the name of a small marsh bird that comes to Minnesota in the

spring. Barbara's first hybrid was a sport of one of Ruth Bann's hybrids. After that, she decided to try some crosses of her own. She hybridizes



Sora Three Dorrs

medium sized standards, both green and variegated. She prefers muted blossoms on variegated foliage and fancy blossoms on solid green foliage. Barbara will provide leaves of her hybrids to the three contest winners.

I will write about two more of our hybridizers in the next issue. Get writing!



Sora Raspberry Patch



Sora Kalikae

Sinningia
'Rock
Washed'

Grown and Hybridized by:
Jay Sespico



Photo Credit: Jay Sespico



Photo Credit: Jay Sespico

Sinningia
'Rock
Council'

Hybridized by: Jay Sespico



Photo Credit: Jay Sespico

Sinningia
'Rock
Authority'

Hybridized by: Jay Sespico

The New and Improved Top 11 Mistakes African Violet Growers Make

By Neil Lipson

In my over 30 years of growing, I have witnessed many mistakes that have ultimately plagued growers. Even though most "top lists" are ten, here are my top 11! Maybe you have a few more to add!

1. Using Marathon *granules* instead of Imidacloprid *liquid*
2. Over-fertilizing in general
3. Using LED lamps without the proper research of light level and color
4. Growing too many plants
5. Inability to toss a sick plant
6. Fertilizing newly repotted plants
7. Lighting is too high or low
8. Failure to routinely groom over time
9. Bringing new plants into collection with bugs
10. Not adjusting for Mother Nature
11. Using pesticides to prevent insects

1. Using Marathon *granules* instead of Imidacloprid *liquid*

This is a paragraph of what I wrote in a previous article on the use of Marathon:

"It was thought that the best way to treat for soil mealy bugs was to measure some Marathon and sprinkle it on top of the soil. However, there were two problems with this method: one was the mealies would acclimate to it and it would stop working; the second was that the mealies, which have hard waxy coatings, would avoid it by going into pockets of non-treated soil and continue to thrive."

The best solution is to use the same ingredient that is in Marathon, Imidacloprid, but in *liquid* form, diluted per the label's recommendations and then drenched into the soil. Most of the time, this one treatment will get them all. If not, drench again about a week later. I use liquid Bonide Tree and Shrub which has 1.47% Imidacloprid that I

purchased from Amazon. Do NOT use granules of any kind. They will NOT penetrate the nook and crannies of the soil.

2. Over-fertilizing in general

This is a special piece advice I learned from Steve Gonzalez's presentation at the 2017 Nationals in Orlando. I was amazed as to how much I was over-fertilizing my violets. What tipped me off was that most of my variegated plants were turning solid green. Even ANN, which has stark variegation, would hardly show any white parts on the leaves. I have since cut back from 1/8 tsp. to 1/16 tsp. per gallon of water, and used a low nitrogen fertilizer. With fertilizer so cheap, it's very easy to assume that more is better. IT IS NOT!

And, when the variegated plant has turned solid green, I have even watered every so often with plain rain water, so it lightens up the nitrogen load.

3. Using LED lamps without the proper research of light level and color

I have seen varied results from the use of LED lamps. Most people assume that you use the same distance as fluorescents and that they have the same color balance. More often, THEY DO NOT! Sometimes you need to really increase the distance from the top of the plants because they produce much more light than you might realize.

So what does the grower do in this situation? I would wait until the dust settles and violet growers have done enough research to know which LED lamps work the best. One of the most important aspects of LED lighting is the red/blue ratio for African Violets. The research has been done on other plants like tomatoes, but very little on violets. Once I see some best in show ribbons for LED grown violets, I will examine what was used and how.

4. Growing too many plants

This is a "sickness" that burdens a huge number of growers. I actually know quite a few growers that think it's a sin to throw away a leaf when you can put it down and give it away! Yes, if it's a particular favorite or a rare variety, it's good to have a backup in case the mother plant dies, but if you grow two or three of the same variety, then your collection just gets out of hand and takes control of your life. If you dread taking care of your collection, then you are probably guilty of this. Gradually give away some of the plants and keep records to whom you gave them if you need a leaf or two in the future. Grow the varieties that you truly love.

5. Inability to toss a sick plant

Unless the sick plant is impossible to get, or if it's one of a kind, the easiest "cure" is to toss it, ESPECIALLY if you suspect INSV, Pythium or Rhizoctonia, which is a fungal infection. If your whole collection is infected, then this is a different matter, but I have frequently heard of people tossing everything in sight. You'll have no problem restart your collection, trust me. Even telling yourself to put down a leaf oftentimes only adds to the aggravation because whatever was causing the plant to "look sick" may be re-created in the baby plants that the leaf produces. So, you've spent all that time and space to accomplish nothing in the end.

6. Fertilizing newly repotted plants

Whenever you repot, the new soil will give the plant a "surge" of nutrients. This surge could last 4 to 8 weeks and in some cases could be quite intense. Organic Mechanics Premium Blend was known for causing tight centers, and many growers "washed" the soil with clear water to prevent problems. Even after doing this, they had to withhold ANY fertilizer for the first 4 to 8 weeks. I personally use Pro-Mix BX BioFungicide + Mycorrhizae. I personally don't have a problem with this soil, but some users needed to stop using fertilizer during its initial use.

7. Lighting is too high or low

I see this often especially when the grower has

a fixed time period of the lamps being on. I personally keep the lights about 10" from the top of the plant and have them running anywhere from 10-12 hours a day, depending on the kind of lamps being used. The better the color, the lower the light level for needed for fluorescents. The color is represented color rendition index (CRI). There is one major misconception that if the light level is too high, you can merely decrease the number of hours. This is fine if it's a little high or low, BUT IT CAN GET YOU IN TROUBLE AT THE EXTREMES. If you cook a turkey for four hours at 350 degrees, does that mean you can cook it for two hours at 700 degrees?

8. Failure to routinely groom over time

I was told, incorrectly, that you can groom your plants three months before a show. That is just plain wrong. Groom your show plants ALL THE TIME. I have written many articles on grooming, and Pat Hancock, Kurt Jablonski and Sandy Skalski all do this 24/7. A plant will quickly lose its symmetry among many other problems if you don't spot those problems early. Every time you water, inspect the plant and do what is necessary: check the symmetry, remove any suckers, remove dead blossoms, keep the leaves clean, and repot if the plant is underpotted or has developed a neck. Yes this takes time, and if you don't have enough time, then check back to number 4 in this list!

9. Bringing new plants into collection with bugs.

Yes, many of the growers will isolate, some for a VERY long time. However, I always go one step further by isolating AND spraying the plant. It will shorten the isolation time to prevent mealybugs, thrips and cyclamen mites. It will do NOTHING at all in treating INSV, but an INSV-infected plant will usually look really bad during warm weather. INSV is a totally different problem in that it is a virus, but if you TOTALLY avoid thrips, then you won't infect the rest of your collection. This is a MUST. Yes, I have heard that some of the warmer states where growers will try to "control" thrips. I STRONGLY RECOMMEND YOU KILL THEM ALL. I've written 3 articles on how to do this. Please take this seriously.

10. Not adjusting for Mother Nature.

I almost forgot how much the outdoor temperatures mattered when I saw the blooming schedules for places like Nebraska. They were 30% longer than the southern states. You need to adjust for these totally different climates, or you'll have full bloom much later or sooner than you would expect. This goes way beyond blooming and can really affect how well your plants grow.

11. Using pesticides to prevent insects

Using pesticides on your plants whether you need them or not is dangerous. It does nothing to stop the insects when you really need them. All insects and mites can build up a resistance to them,

which is going to happen by practicing this kind of behavior. It's similar to taking antibiotics every month or two. It just is irresponsible to do this as these pesticide-resistant insects will spread and then you'll never be able to stop them.

These mistakes are some of the worst practices you can make when you grow violets or any other gesneriads. Spread the word to avoid this from happening in the future.

I would like to thank Carolee Carter for her technical help and proofing this article.

Neil Lipson is a full-time computer consultant. He can be reached by emailing him at ndlipson@gmail.com or calling 610-356-6183 after 1pm Eastern Time. He will return your call.

Convention Report

By Laurel Goretsky

The Florida weather was hot and humid but Orlando was a wonderful host city for the 2017 convention and show "Florida: Gateway to the Tropics". The showroom was large and bright and full of delightful plants.

In the amateur horticulture division, semi-miniatures took some top awards. Kurt Jablonski from Miami Beach, FL won the best African violet in the show and the best trailer with the semi-miniature "Rob's Boolaroo". This delightful trailer has semidouble light pink sticktite pansy blossoms with bright blue fantasy. The leaves are medium green and quilted.

The third best African violet in the show was won by Dmitry Ozherelyev from Moscow, Russia with the semiminiature "N-Avatar". As this is not a registered variety listed in First Class, I will try to give an accurate description of it. The blossoms are a single purple bell with a white edge. The foliage is variegated green and cream and pointed. I do apologize for any error I have made. "N-Avatar" was also the best semiminiature in the show.

The best AVSA miniature/semiminiature collection was won by Julie Jones from Lewis Center, OH

with the miniatures "Jolly Orchid", "Little Blue Bandit", and "Persian Prince". "Jolly Orchid" has double orchid and white pansy blossoms. The leaves are medium green, plain and quilted. "Little Blue Bandit" has single-semi double dark blue star blossoms against dark green, heart-shaped foliage. "Persian Prince" has semidouble blue pansy blossoms. The girl foliage is medium green, ovate and scalloped.

The best miniature African violet in the show was won by Anne Nicholas from Denton, TX with "Jolly LuLu". There is not a description on First Class but the blossoms are single white bell with a purple eye. The foliage is green, small and pointed.

It is with regret that this will be my last column for the AVM. I am so thankful for the support and kindness that I have received over the years. Your feedback was always so appreciated. I am especially thankful to Ruth Rumsey, who encouraged me to do the column and was a constant help along the way. My passion for miniatures and semi-miniatures has not gone away just circumstances in life preventing me from paying the attention to this column that I should.

Keep growing our beloved African violets!

A Family Portrait

By Paul Kroll

4325 Two Rod Road • East Aurora, NY 14052

Email: pfkroll@roadrunner.com

Drymonia chiribogana

There are many species within the genus *Drymonia*. Many of them will grow into tall trees in their native habitats. Various growth habits and sizes are represented in this group. *Drymonia chiribogana* is an attractive plant in that its striped leaves with a red blush back are very attractive, even without blooms.

I have grown several pots of this particular species for several years. Most of the time they are just watered and otherwise neglected. When my haphazard care gets to this stage, they can get quite leggy and ramble all over, even hanging off the shelf of their light stand. This is not a pretty sight, but they thrive!

The growth tips of several nodes, when cut off and rooted, form a compact, rather bushy plant that is quite attractive in appearance. These plants are



not fast growers, and can be pinched to bush out, or allowed to grow tall or ramble. I keep them under two T-8 tubes at the end of a shelf. No special care needed.

I have used the leaves individually in cut arrangements, even without a water source! They will last for a day or two that way, provided they are cut fresh

from a well-watered plant. The plants I have grown of this species have leaves of 3 to 5 inches in length when mature. Their structure is a bit "rubbery", hence their ability to last awhile out of a water source.

The plant does bloom, although not regularly for me. A beautiful, blooming specimen was exhibited by Brandon Erikson at the 2017 Gesneriad Society convention show in Omaha, Nebraska. That photo accompanies this article.



The Propagation of Fantasies

By Pat Hancock

Of all the beautiful blossoms that grace our modern African violets, "fantasies" have been my favorites for many years. They are also the most unstable, unpredictable, and independent of all African violets. They often seem to have a "mind of their own."

In many ways they seem to be similar to chimeras, in that they are subject to change from heat and cold, fertilizers, etc. The first bloom on a fantasy seedling is seldom the bloom it will have when more blooms mature. They hardly ever propagate true 100% of the time from leaf cuttings. The word "variable" appears more often in their descriptions than in the descriptions of any other color pattern. In spite of all these negatives, they will always be my favorite African violets.

Many years ago at an AVSA convention, I noticed that two different commercial vendors were selling the same fantasy African violet. I noticed that those from one vendor were much more marked and colorful than were those from the other. I asked about it and learned that the commercial with the brighter flowers was growing them as though they were chimeras. The other was growing them in the normal way, from leaf cuttings.

The difference in the plants was striking, and I wondered if it could be that some fantasies *should* be treated as though they were chimeras? Chimeras do not have a complete copy of their genetics in the leaves, only in the blossoms. Perhaps some fantasies show a tendency to behave the same way.

I believe that many of our modern day chimeras are sports of fantasy-type blossoms. I have even seen plants where half of the blossoms were fantasies, and half were chimeras. Could they be more closely related than we know? Is it possible that some fantasies would be more colorful, and beautiful, if we treated their propagation the same as chimeras, i.e. bloom stems or crown removal?

Several years ago I hybridized a plant called 'Buckeye Especially Mine'. It was a cross between 'Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler' and 'Buckeye Calico'. It is the only cross that I have ever made between

"sister seedlings." Very close breeding is said to magnify whatever genes are present be they good or bad. This cross produced several lovely Buckeye Cranberry Sparkler plants, many of them fantasies. 'Buckeye Eyestopper', 'Buckeye Easy Goer', 'Buckeye Extravaganza', 'Buckeye Evermore Freckles', 'Buckeye Elderberry Wine', 'Buckeye Enough Pizazz', 'Buckeye Electric Dream' and 'Buckeye Especially Mine'. My favorite plant from the Buckeye Calico cross was 'Buckeye Especially Mine' - hence, the name.

I gave the original seedling to my friend, Anne Thomas, and put down many leaves for testing. When the babies from the second generation bloomed, they were disappointing. Few, if any, were as colorful as the original seedling. They were pretty, but not as pretty. Occasionally, a gorgeous one would show up, but not often enough. We tried suckers from Anne's plant, but some of those were not the same. We stopped short of removing the crown as we did not want to risk losing the plant. Then I remembered the plants grown a few years earlier by the two commercial vendors and decided to try bloom stems. Sure enough, the plants grown from bloom stems were much more colorful and amazingly like the original. About this time, Anne showed the original plant at the Minneapolis convention. I don't remember what it won, but it was quite a hit and several people asked for leaves. I wished afterwards that I had advised them to try a bloom stem.

Bloom stems do not make as many plantlets as leaves - usually only one or two. However, the color will be the same on the resulting plant as it was on the bloom. If you are having a problem with fantasies sporting to solid or less colorful from leaf cuttings, I would suggest trying propagation with bloom stems. The method I am now using is with a product called Clonex®. Clonex® is a root promoting gel that can be used to start suckers, crown, and bloom stems. It can be purchased from hydroponic stores. Cut the bloom stem about one inch below the bracts. Carefully remove the bloom

and buds. DO NOT remove the bracts. Dip the cut end in the Clonex® - just the tip. Plant in a Solo cup with holes punched in the bottom. I plant in one half AV soil and one half vermiculite that is moist but not dripping wet. Cover with a plastic bag and place under lights. Plantlets may be repotted when

they have six leaves. See past issues of the **African Violet Magazine** for more information on propagating chimeras.

From the *Dixie News*,
Publication of the Dixie AVS



Photo Credit: Winston J. Goretsky

Rob's Lucky Stroke

Exhibited by: Kathy Lahti

Hybridized by: R. Robinson

Semiminiature

The Mystic pH

By Ron Smith

What a favorite subject, used by some to dazzle others with eloquence. Perhaps it is one of the most important elements in African Violet growing and could be one basic principle that gets the least attention and consideration.

What is this mystic pH? Why is it called pH? Not Ph or even ph. Well, its all to do with a method that originated in France whereby the relative strength of an acid solution could be measured and recorded. In French it is *pouvoir hydrogen* (Hydrogen power), indicating the hydrogen ion concentration of a solution. Yes, it is as simple as that; it is a scale to indicate the acid or alkaline strength in solution. Just like temperature is read from a thermometer.

With this system, we are able to measure the pH factor in any solution or mixture. In addition, we are able to decide that we put in the potting mix into a food that whether the mix, solution or water is to the African violet's liking.

This measuring scale of pH how does it go? The scale is divided in steps from 0 to 14. Each step is then divided again into 10 smaller steps. So between pH 6.0 and pH 7.0 there are 10 further divisions, for example, 6.0, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5 and so on up to 7.0.

- Acidity goes from pH 0, which equals strong acid, to pH 6, which indicates weak acid.
- Pure water is measured at pH 7.
- Alkalinity is measured from pH 8 weak to pH 14 strong.

So how do I relate all of this pH business to my little African violet?

We are all well aware that if the plant does not have, warmth, air, light, water, although the plants roots are anchored in a potting mix and it is receiving the correct nutrients, the plant will not grow, that is a simple fact. It is obvious that each of these elements have a perfection area so get all of them correct and the African violet will grow to perfection.

But see the next paragraph!

Now let us imagine that the warmth, air, and light conditions are in every way to the plants liking, but the pH level of the potting mix and fertilizer solution is way out, then all of your efforts are wasted. So lets now start to look at what the pH (acid content of the soil mix and the solution of nutrients) is all about, and why it is so important.

African violets love a potting mix that tests to a pH (acidity figure) of 6.8 and it will tolerate pH slightly higher or lower say between 6.4 and 7.0.

Why? It all comes down to the fact that most plants in the world grow best in certain conditions that are to their liking. This choice is not an accident; it is all to do with what food - nutrients - they need to grow. Basically an imitation of their original environment and habitat.

What we do not realize is that in the potting mix there is a very complex processing factory run by millions and millions of workers - microorganisms - that are constantly converting the fertilizers - nutrients - which have been added to the potting mix, into a food that the African violet uses to grow. These microorganisms can only work to perfection if the temperature and the pH levels are correct.

If the soil mix is too hot or too cold the microorganisms go on strike for better living conditions. The plant suffers because food is not processed and in consequence, is not available.

If the pH level is not in the acceptable range then microorganisms find it difficult to process some of the chemicals. It is similar to making a cake, if you do not have all the ingredients in the correct amount, no cake.

Microorganisms can only process fertilizers - nutrients - into available plant food when the acid content (pH) is correct for that specific chemical. If the pH is not in the range for the processing for that chemical, then the production line stops, so again no food for the plant.

How often do we see plants with very light green leaves on a show bench? We usually say "lack of iron". The grower may say, "Well, I gave

it the usual fertilizer". Could it be that the pH of the potting mix is not in the necessary range, and the microorganisms cannot process the iron into plant food?

As general guidelines it can be said that chemicals can only be processed as follows:

- Below pH 6.5, nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium, calcium, magnesium, sulfur, and trace elements become unavailable because they cannot be processed.
- Above 7.5, phosphorous, iron, manganese, boron, copper, and zinc also become unavailable.

So now we can understand that the pH of the soil and water is a very important element to African violet growing. You can do everything 100% correct, but if the pH of the soil is not cor-

rect then all those micro organisms will not be operating the processing factory for you.

pH testing is very simple and a test kit for potting mix, which contains all the directions for its use, can be obtained quite cheaply at most garden centers. There is also a test kit available for water so that fertilizer solutions can also be tested. These are usually available from stores that deal with hydroponics or aquariums.

One further thought; by all means get your pH correct for potting mix but be careful with the pH of the fertilizer solution. If the pH is incorrect it can alter the pH in your potting mix. I am sure your plants will tell you.

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